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JEMIMA WILKISON.

See p 121.

Hudson, David

MEMOIR

OF

JEMIMA WILKINSON,

A PREACHERESS OF THE EIGHTEENTH
CENTURY;

CONTAINING AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE OF HER

LIFE AND CHARACTER,

AND OF THE

RISE, PROGRESS AND CONCLUSION OF
HER MINISTRY.

—o—

"Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."
Matt. vii, 20.

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PREFACE.

In presenting the public with this History, the author begs leave to remark, that no pains or diligence, nor reasonable expense, has been spared in obtaining correct information; and although he had been personally acquainted with Jemima for many years previous to her death, and knew much of her history, yet he has not here stated any facts or circumstances in relation to her character or conduct, without the authority of persons of respectability for their veracity from whom he received them, together with a solemn assurance that they had been eye and ear witnesses of all they related concerning her.

And although true it is, that from the great length of time which has elapsed since Jemima commenced her career as a Preacheress, and from the imperfection of man's memory, some inaccuracies may have intervened as to the order of time in which the events of her life happened, yet as to the existence of those events, and their attendant circumstances, all those who pretend to relate them agree with remarkable precision and exactness.

The history of Jemima Wilkinson thus rests upon the testimony of a variety of witnesses, one of whom was acquainted with her, and knew her well, from her birth to her death; and the residue of whom were intimately acquainted with her, were almost constantly with her, and had an opportunity of learning whatever took place in her society, from the commencement to the termination of her ministry. Although there is some diversity of opinion among them as to the real views and character of Jemima, yet they agree precisely in the statement of all the material facts they undertake to relate. The author, therefore, feels warranted in offering this to the reader as an authentic History of the life of Jemima Wilkinson. He makes no other pretension. That it is defective in point of style and arrangement, he is free to acknowledge. But these are defects which he has neither leisure nor skill to remedy, and for which he will, therefore, make no apology; nor is he at all anxious as to the good or ill will of critics: for as he does not expect, so neither will he ask, any exemption from the exercise of what they deem their rights. In conclusion, however, he would remark, that it has not been his intention to give offence to any one, but that he has written this History for the amusement of himself, and of those who may choose to read it.

INTRODUCTION.

It has been the unfortunate lot of mankind, in all ages and in all countries, to be divided in their views of a future state; and while the existence of a Supreme, creating and governing Spirit has been almost universally acknowledged, the opinions of men concerning the nature and attributes of that Spirit, have been various and contradictory. Since the light of Revelation has been sent to the assistance of the human mind, many, and perhaps some of the greatest, difficulties which inquiry had to encounter, have entirely vanished. The Great Creator of all things has been graciously pleased from time to time to manifest himself unto his fallen creatures, and to furnish them with the means of learning his power, his mercy, his wisdom and his truth; of knowing themselves, their duty to him and to each other;—the nature and extent of the service he requires of them, and the manner in which that service shall be rendered; the rewards which await those who acknowledge and obey, and the punishments which are reserved for those who deny, his authority. But such is the weakness and perversity of the human mind, that with all these advantages, men have never been able to unite together in one common system of faith and practice; and even at the present day, with the wisdom, research and experience of ages before them, they are, perhaps, as much divided on the subject of Religion, as at any former period of the world. Systems almost innumerable still prevail, and the votary of each thinks himself peculiarly favored of Heaven, in being led into the only safe and sure road to future happiness.

Among those systems the Christian Religion stands pre-eminent for its purity, its authenticity, and for the beneficial effects (even in this world) which have, in all ages, attended its promulgation and a belief in its doctrines. Although there may, and probably always will, exist some diversity of sentiment as to the rites and ceremonies, and the temporal government and discipline of the Christian Church, yet in respect to those principles which constitute the foundation of the system itself, there is but little difference. The existence of the Trinity, the fall of man, the atonement by Christ, and the necessity of repentance, faith and obedience, are truths which for ages past have been almost universally acknowledged throughout Christendom, which form the basis of the Christian's hope, and from which he derives those maxims of moral and religious duty, upon the observance of which, and the mercy of God, he relies for future happiness.

The division of the Christian community into numerous and various denominations, is a circumstance much used by those who deny the divine origin of Christianity, as an argument against the authenticity of the Scriptures; but a careful investigation of the subject will convince every impartial mind that this argument proves nothing against the Christian religion; though it clearly demonstrates (what is always admitted) the imperfection of man, the weakness of his judgment and his liability to err. So long, therefore, as the leading and important doctrines of the Gospel are taught and believed, by the different Churches which acknowledge Christ as their head, charity, the brightest and most precious ornament in the Christian character, permits every denomination to enjoy, uninterruptedly, their various opinions respecting their outward forms and ceremonies, requiring only, that all should sincerely believe the truth of what they profess. But this is the extent to which charity will require, and perhaps permit, us to go. If we believe in that system of religion which we profess, our duty to ourselves, and to the master we serve, requires us to withhold our assent and countenance from those who attempt to promulgate new systems of faith and practice which contradict the evidence of our senses, and which are at war with the doctrines of the gospel; for Christ hath said "Beware of false Prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."* That there should rise false Christs and false Prophets who should deceive and delude mankind, was expressly foretold by our Saviour.* And that many such have already risen, pretending to extra ordinary missions, exciting the wonder of the credulous, the fears of the timid, and misleading the unwary, history bears ample and painful testimony·

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* Matthew vii. 15.

Accounts are already recorded† of twenty four of these impostors who have flourished in various countries, and at different periods since the Christian era, who have either denied in direct terms the divinity of our Saviour, or attempted to propagate new creeds and strange doctrines altogether inconsistent with the Christian Religion.

To this melancholy account of enthusiasm, delusion and imposture, we are now about to add another instance in the History of Jemima Wilkinson. Whether the character of this woman, and her doctrines and career, resembled those of former pretenders, is not a matter of any consequence. It is our business to give a faithful history of her life and character, according to the best information that could be obtained; from which the reader may draw his own conclusion, and from which, it is presumed, he will find but little difficulty in determining whether or not this extraordinary personage belonged to that class to which our blessed Lord and Saviour alluded in his conversation with his disciples on the Mount of Olives.‡

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* Matthew xxiv, 11—Mark xiii, 5,6, 21 and 22.

† Buck's Theological Dictionary, p. 308, 9.

‡ Mark xxiii, 9 and 22,

MEMOIR OF JEMIMA WILKINSON.

JEMIMA WILKINSON, was born in the town of Cumberland, in the county of Providence and state of Rhode Island, of obscure, but reputable parents. Her father Jeremiah Wilkinson, was a farmer by occupation, and possessed a small estate in Cumberland, the cultivation of which occupied his attention, and afforded a comfortable support for his family. He was a man of strong mind, and rather stubborn disposition. Not having enjoyed the benefits of an education, he, as is too often the case, set a light value upon mental improvement, and made a merit of despising the politer accomplishments. He usually attended the Friends' meetings, being more attached to their society than to any other religious sect, yet was never acknowledged by them as a regular member of their community. In early life he married a young woman of the name of Amy Whipple, by whom he had twelve children, six sons and six daughters. *Jemima*, their eighth child, was born in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty one, and to her exclusively, is this family indebted for the celebrity of its name. Her mother was an amiable and intelligent woman, an exemplary house wife, and an affectionate mother ; and to the care and instruction of her children was her whole life devoted. She was a member of the society of Friends for many years, and highly esteemed for her benevolence and piety, and the uniform tenor of her useful life. She died soon after the birth of her youngest child, leaving the care and education of her children to their father, whose ideas on this subject extended but little, if any, beyond instructing them in those branches of labor and domestic economy, to which he had himself been accustomed, and by which his family had been supported. The loss of his wife was to him a very severe affliction, from the effects o which he never fully recovered. He remained single, and towards the close of his life became melancholy—spent the greater part of his time in solitude, and died at the advanced age of about seventy years.

Jemima was about eight years old when her mother died, and from that time, until she arrived at the age of sixteen, she exhibited no peculiar traits of character or temper which would distinguish her from other girls of her age and rank in life, excepting her unconquerable aversion to every thing like labor. She seldom differed with those about her, unless when requested to perform her part of the drudgery of the family--and on these occasions she evinced an unusual share of cunning in shifting upon her elder sisters the tasks assigned her. To effect this, she resorted, from time to time, to every expedient of which she was mistress: flattery, persuasion and pretences of ill health, were in turn brought to her aid, and when these failed, they were succeeded by so much stubbornness and negligence, as to increase the labor of the family in compelling her to perform her duty. Jemima had now become a fine blooming girl, was sprightly in her manners, comely in her person, and possessed of no ordinary share of beauty; and had her excellent mother lived to enjoy the sweet satisfaction of moulding her disposition, of cultivating her understanding, and of instilling into her tender mind those principles of obedience, industry and benevolence, which she herself possessed, and which so eminently distinguish the society of Friends, Jemima would doubtless have been a useful member of the community, and an ornament to the little circle in which she moved. But these advantages being lost to her, she grew up in idleness and disobedience, and discovered early and strong symptoms of that propensity to dictate and rule which characterised her after career. Finding her extremely troublesome, and altogether useless at home, her father at length yielded to her repeated solicitations to go abroad and learn the trade of a tailoress: and happy had it been for many a ruined family had she made herself mistress of, and followed that useful occupation, through life.

Released from the control of her sisters, the restraint to which she had been subjected, enlivened by the novelty of her new situation, and entertained by the routine of customers and the *technical* language of the shop, she was at first highly delighted, and no doubt thought herself extremely fortunate in this change of employment. But these effects gradually wore off, and ere long the causes which had induced her to desire to leave her father's house, operated with equal force in producing a strong inclination again to return thither. Her impatience of restraint, her total aversion to any regular employment, and her ungovernable temper, began to make their appearance, and at length rendered her longer sojourning with her new acquaintance altogether inadmissible. She was accordingly dismissed and sent back to her father, after an absence of about ten months.

From this time for about seven years, nothing occurred respecting our heroine, the relation of which would be either interesting or instructive. Her contempt of industry, and her fondness for dress and company, increased with her years. She had many broils and contests with her sisters, in most of which she succeeded by her obstinacy or management. Amusement and pleasure, an exemption from the cares and confinement of domestic life, and an insatiable ambition for parade, superiority and dictation, had become her ruling passions. Her ripening beauties, her quick and sharp wit, and her elegant person, procured her admirers, which increased her pride and vanity, and rendered her regardless of every thing which did not minister to her gratification. She declared that she would not attend church, or go into any public company, unless she could appear better attired than any other person in the assembly;—that she had but one life to live, and *that* she intended to spend in ease and enjoyment. She had lost all respect for her family—set at nought her father's authority, and spurned the advice and admonitions of her sisters. Fools might do as they pleased, she would say, but as for herself, she owed allegiance to no mortal, neither would she be controlled by man or woman.

Jemima was now about twenty three years of age, and extremely gay and listless, spending her time in idleness at home, or visiting and amusement abroad. The boldness with which she declared her intentions, and the persevering obstinacy with which she carried them into effect, surprised and confounded her eldest sisters; and her father, being far advanced in life, seldom troubled himself about his daughters, whom he now considered old enough to govern themselves. She thus gained a complete ascendency in her family, which she maintained with jealous care during the residueof her life.

About the year 1774, there sprang up in the county of Providence, a sect of religionists styling themselves "*New-Lights*," called by some "*New-Light Baptists*" and by others "*Separaters*," they having separated from other denominations. The *zeal* of these fanatics exceeded that of all other professors of religion, and constituted, in their opinion, no doubt, their chief excellence. They insisted upon the practicability and necessity of living continually in the power and spirit of religion, which consisted in constantly exhibiting outward evidence of the internal workings of the spirit; which they failed not to do whenever an opportunity offered of attracting public notice. They had for a considerable time but little success in gaining proselytes to their new scheme: but from their want, or contempt, of regular church organization and government, this society held out strong temptations to noisy and ambitious zealots, who might wish to distinguish themselves as leaders in their meetings, to join them. By their creed also, (if creed it could be called) all persons who fancied themselves to be unceasingly actuated by the spirit and power of religion, and to be constantly guided by an illumination directly from heaven, were deemed fit for immediate membership, and were accordingly admitted without much scrutiny as to their morals or conduct. About the close of this year there was a considerable addition to the society of Separaters in the town of Cumberland, and the zeal and fervor manifested by them, engaged for a while the serious attention of some and the curiosity of others. Among the latter, was Jemima, whose impatience of confinement, and fondness for gaiety, dress and public company, drew her to all the meetings in her neighborhood. She soon however became seriously inclined, and steady in her attendance on these meetings; her airy gaiety was exchanged for sedateness and reflection, and in her outward demeanor she gave strong evidence of a change in the state of her mind. But as she did not furnish sufficient evidence of enthusiastic devotion to satisfy the requirements of their system, she was never considered a member of the society. She continued to attend their meetings with great punctuality, was very attentive, and appeared to be much attached to these people. But this society, after flourishing a short time, went rapidly to decay, and was broken up by the falling off of its members, almost as suddenly as it was formed. By the immutable laws of nature it is provided, that every elevation of the human mind which is produced by the presence of unusually exciting causes, must almays be suceeeded by a depression, equally removed from the common standard, whenever those exciting causes cease to exist, or the mind becomes insensible to their operation. It is therefore, perhaps, no matter of wonder, that these enthusiastic zealots after having been suddenly wrought up to a pitch of fanaticism bordering on phrenzy, by endeavorng to outdo every body else, and even each other, in the vehemence of their devotion, should as abruptly fall off, become scattered, and finally, with their crude and undefined system, pass quietly down the current of time, leaving scarcely a trace behind. But although Jemima had not been operated upno with that violence which was common to the most zealous of this society, yet her mind appeared to have received a strong impression as to the nature and necessity of religion, during her attendance upon these meetings, which wrought a very considerable change in her habits and conduct. She continued thoughtful and serious, and instead of the pursuit of pleasure, religious subjects principally engrossed her attention. She had always shown a fondness for books, and had read many of the common-place productions within her reach; light and airy tales, novels, romances, newspapers and poetry, occupied chiefly her attention at home, and served as a pretext for refusing to take upon herself a due share of the domestic duties of the family. But her taste was now entirely changed as to the choice of books, while her inclination for reading became stronger than ever, and instead of amusement, she now read for instruction, and those volumes which had formerly been her delight, gave place to her Bible, with which she had previously enjoyed but a slight acquaintance. Her visiting abroad, of which she had been excessively fond, became less frequent, and was confined chiefly to the serious and sedate of her acquaintance. She forgot in some measure her pride of dress, and the little jealousies with which her rival beauties in the neighborhood had formerly inspired her, were no longer held in remembrance. She continued for several months to grow more reserved, and fond of solitude, altogether discontinuing her visits abroad and confining herself mostly to her room. This increasing change in her disposition and conduct, was noticed by her family and acquaintance, and as they all knew her to possess an ardent mind, they concluded that she was laboring under those impressions which she had received on the subject of religion, and that peace and cheerfulness would in due time revisit her troubled breast. She was therefore indulged in her retirement, until about midsummer 1776, when she secluded herself altogether from company and social converse, and to avoid intrusion, and satisfy inquiries, complained of ill health, and occasionally kept her bed. The family, alarmed at this strange conduct, thought proper to call in the family Physician, who visited her regularly for several days, and very carefully examined her case, but could not ascertain that she endured any pain or distress, or that her system was disordered; but was given to understand by her, that she needed none of his assistance. He therefore gave it as his opinion, that her bodily health was altogether unimpaired, and that she was laboring under some strong mental delusion, the removal of which would wean her from love of solitude, and restore her to her family, friends and society; but to affect this required a skill which he did not possess. He continued his visits however, though rather in compliance with the wishes of the family than in the hope or expectation of benefiting his patient. Jemima continued in this state until the latter end of September, when she pretended an increase of illness and confined herself altogether to her bed. In a few weeks after, she became feeble and wan, and the apparent decline of her health so increased the solicitude of the family, that nightly watchers were procured to attend in her room, while she received the constant care of her sisters by day. She now began to speak of having visions from heaven, and extraordinary visitations from the regions beyond the skies; and at the dead hour of night, when all nature was hushed to repose, and her timid attendants were tremblingly alive to the least rustling of the breeze which fell upon the loosened shutter of her window, she would endeavor to impress upon their minds the reality of these ridiculous pretences, by describing, with great solemnity, the ominous noises which she heard, the ghostly sights which were constantly presented to her vision, and the celestial forms which were continually passing in her view. Yet still the attending Physician declared that she labored under no disease or debilitating cause, excepting what arose from her long, obstinate and close confinement, and the gloomy workings of a diseased imagination; and the confidence with which he maintained this opinion, the care and attention with which he had investigated her case, together with his high standing as a member of the faculty, satisfied the family and their friends as to the situation of his patient, and the nature of her malady.

On Thursday evening, about the latter end of October 1776, two women of the neighborhood came to watch with Jemima, who were far from being superstitious, and who were not very likely to be disturbed by those tales of wonder and mystery with which she had frightened several of her nurses of less courage and fortitude. As soon as the family had retired to rest, and the house became still, she began to entertain those attendants with the old story of her visitations and visions, and the sights, and forms, and noises, which she continually saw and heard. But these ladies were not to be intimidated, or imposed upon by such vagrant assertions; and when she requested them to observe the white figures and celestial forms which she pretended to point out, they denied that any thing of the kind was apparent, and chided her folly; but Jemima insisted the more obstinately in proportion to their incredulity, and bade them take notice of the motion of her bed curtains, asserting at the same time, that it was occasioned by the presence of the Lord, who was then visiting and ministering unto her. This tremulous motion of her curtains was produced, as her attendants afterwards declared, by Jemima, in pressing her feet against the wall at the foot of her bed. She also informed them that a great change in her state and condition was soon to take place, and that she felt conscious she was about to be called to act some great and useful part in this wicked world, for the benefit of mankind. In this manner she vexed her attendants and fatigued herself, until a little past eleven o'clock, when she fell into a light slumber, and continued in that situation for nearly an hour. Her nurse, during this interval of quiet, went several times to her bed side, and observed her to be pale and motionless, and apparently lifeless; but upon a close examination fou nd her features unchanged, her pulse regular, and her respiration so soft and silent as almost to elude the closest scrutiny. Immediately after the clock struck twelve, she raised herself up in bed, and appeared as if suddenly awakened from a refreshing sleep. Her attendants inquired of her what she wanted, when to their utter astonishment, she, in an authoritative tone, and a voice much stronger than usual, demanded her clothes; one of them desired her to lie down and compose herself to rest, but she still persisted in her demand with increased firmness and austerity, declaring that she had passed the gates of death, and was now *risen from the dead*. Her father, who had been sleeping in an ad joining room, being awakened by their loud talk, rose and came to the door, and on being informed of her strange whims, endeavored to quiet her clamour and sooth her to repose, but she disdainfully rejected his kind attentions, as an impertinent interference, and told him she owed obedience to the higher powers only. Her apparel was procured, and she immediately got up and dressed herself, and from that time forward went about in apparently as good health as she had usually enjoyed, though somewhat feeble and emaciated by her long confinement.

Jemima did not go abroad until the Sabbath following; in the meanwhile many of her neighbors and acquaintance called to see her, having understood that she had recovered; but she repelled, with the utmost promptitude, their congratulations on her *recovery*, and denied that it was not Jemima to whom they were speaking, and with affected solemnity informed them that the body of Jemima Wilkinson had been dead, that her soul was then in heaven, and that the tabernacle which Jemima had left behind was re-animated by the power and spirit of Jesus Christ, that this was the second coming of the Lord, who was to remain on earth and reign a thousand years, that it was the eleventh hour, and the last call of mercy that would ever be made to the human race; that an "inquiry was made in Heaven saying, 'Who will go and Preach to a dying World?' and she answered, 'Here am I, send me,' and that she thereupon immediately left the realms of light and glory, and the company of the heavenly host, who are continually worshiping God—in order to pass through many trials and sufferings for the happiness of mankind." She said also, that on leaving the realms of bliss, it had been given her to choose whether she would be received back into Heaven, bodily, at the end of the first ten days of her terrestrial residence, or remain on earth and encounter the difficulties and sufferings of the world, for the benefit of mankind for a thousand years, and then receive a corporeal translation into Heaven. She said that "those who refused to believe these exalted things concerning her, will be in the state of the unbelieving Jews, who neglected the counsel of God against themselves." At the end of the ten days, not having left her friends, she informed them that she had elected to reign on earth a thousand years, and that the *tabernacle* which she inhabited, (a cant phrase which she ever after used when speaking of her person) was immortal, that it would never die, and that at the close of that period it would be taken up into Heaven in a cloud of glory.

Many of her friends and relations of Jemima visited her during the Friday and Saturday following the termination of her confinement, and various were their sensations and conjectures on witnessing her absurd conduct, and in contemplating the reprehensible course which she appeared determined to pursue. Some were vexed with her arrogance and obstinacy; others were intimidated by the set manner of her speech, the firmness of her voice, the inflexibility of her countenance, and the steady and intense stare from her keen eye; while the greater part of them believed her to be laboring under a slight degree of mental derangement, occasioned by the debility arising from her recent confinement, which they hoped would gradually wear off as her strength returned; while they all agreed that there was something very strange in her conduct. No one, however, believed a word of her preposterous pretensions, or that she would attempt to persevere in them for any considerable length of time, for all were certain that it was the same person, the same Jemima, whom they had known and seen daily from her infancy.

On Sabbath day after Jemima Wilkinson *rose from the*—BED, she made her appearance at the public meeting in the neighborhood; she was habited in plain and simple attire, but with the utmost neatness; her countenance was pale and languid, which, with a good form and graceful movement, gave her an interesting appearance. It being remarkable fine weather, people attended meeting from a considerable distance, so that there was an unusually large audience. Immediately after morning service was ended, and while the congregation were waiting about the meeting house, as was customary during the intermission, Jemima walked to a shade tree at a little distance, where, as she no doubt expected and wished, a considerable number immediately followed her; she then began without any ceremony to address them. This drew others along, and in a few minutes almost the whole congregation were gathered about her. This crafty actress now summoned all her powers to please her audience and engage their attention, and although not accustomed to speak in public, she continued her discourse for nearly half an hour with considerable fluency, and without discovering any signs of embarrassment. Her feeble voice, her graceful gestures, her languid countenance, her persuasive language, and the soft expression of her fine eyes, together with her recent extraordinary confinement, and the novelty of the scene before them, produced a great effect upon her hearers. This address was rather in the style of a moral lecture than a sermon. She descanted upon the beauty of virtue and morality, of the heinousness of sin, and the necessity of an amendment of life, and a faithful discharge of every duty; and evinced a knowledge of the scriptures, and an acquaintance with religious subjects generally, which astonished all who heard her. She had spent the principal part of her time for about a year with her Bible, and other religious books, and her memory was so retentive that she could repeat a greater portion of what she had read than almost any other person of her time. As this was her first attempt, and as much of her future success depended upon the effect she could now produce, it is reasonable to suppose that her discourse had been carefully prepared for the first opportunity of the kind that should present itself. Although she did not offer herself to her hearers as their saviour, yet she had several strong allusions to the facts and circumstances which she had asserted to her visitants during the two preceding days. Having ended her address, she informed them that whoever wished to see and converse with her, could enjoy that privilege by calling on her at the place where she sojourned, and immidiately left them ; but took care on this, as on all subsequent occasions, to say nothing about home, father, brothers or sisters, or any thing that should imply a relationship and connexion between herself and the rest of the human race According to her invitation many called to see her from time to time, some from a desire of convincing her of the impiety of her conduct and pretensions, and the folly and danger of persevering in such blasphemies ; and many from mere curiosity. As there was frequently a considerable collection at her father's to spend an evening, she had many opportunities of exhorting and praying to an audience, and was sure never to let them pass unimproved. She attended all the meetings in the town—was present at all the conferences and collections of serious people, and particularly at funerals, and always watched an opportunity of posting herself in some conspicuous place, and haranguing those who would pay attention to her discourses. From the novelty of such conduct, and the earnestness of her demeanor, she generally attracted more attention than any other speaker. After having pursued this desultory kind of preaching for some months, and finding a few inclined to become her followers, Jemima ventured to appoint meetings of her own. This succeded beyond her most sanguine expectation. Her meetings were more numerous and attentive than she or any other person had anticipated. Her fame began to spread abroad, persons came from a distance to hear her, and invited her to go into other towns to preach. This was a result for which she had been for some time anxiously looking, and to produce which, she had strove with all the art and cunning of which she was mistress. Accordingly, these invitations were eagerly accepted, and promptly complied with, out of *pure zeal*, no doubt, for the welfare of souls. It was also favorable to the success of her schemes, for by shifting about from place to place, she was, at no period, stationary a sufficient length of time to hazard an exposure of her real motives and true character. In her perambulations she visited New-Port, Providence, Seconnet and North and South Kingston in the State of Rhode-Island, and New-Milford and some other places in Connecticut, and New-Bedford in Massachusetts.

Having undertaken to establish a new

religion, and to organize a sect of which she was to be the head and founder, it became expedient (in her judgment) to avoid the beaten track of all denominations of christians; she accordingly rejected with disdain all forms and ceremonies, all church government and dicipline, and finally the sacraments, and many other leading doctrines of Christianity. Hence it came to pass, that her society was composed of dissenters from other denominations, those who had been suspended or excluded from church membership for their disorderly conduct—-a few unprincipled adventurers, and a still greater number of weak men and women, and inexperienced girls and children. As the society increased, however, her means of deception multiplied, until she succeeded in deluding several persons of respectability for wealth and intelligence. Indeed, it soon became her leading object to proselyte those who possessed the means of supporting her in her idleness and extravagance. She visited New Port while the British forces lay there, tarried some time, and preached to the officers, who were very much pleased and amused with her; one of whom, in particular, pretended to be violently in love with her, paid her his addresses, and obtained se veral *private in-*

terviews with his fair instructress. It was agreed between them, that he should resign his commission in the service of his King, and enlist under the banners of a mistress, in whose service there would be more comfort and less hazard. In short, that he should retire to his estates, which he pretended to possess in his native country, where she was to follow him as soon as possible, when the contract now entered into was to be more publicly and formally ratified. As no human eye or ear was permitted to witness the tenderness of the parting scene, the reader must not expect a minute description of it. Suffice it to say, that she returned to North-Kingston, and the fleet some time after left the port. Jemima now began to preach universal love and good will to all mankind, deplored the infatuation of the people of England in sending troops to this country to murder their brethren; and in due time discovered to her credulous followers, that it was her duty to go and preach peace and benevolence to the people of the mother country, to the end, that wars and rumors of wars might cease. So successfully did this arch deceiver practice upon her confiding people, that the measure was cheerfully assented to by them, and every preparation made for her voyage.

Her passage was engaged, clothing purchased, sea stores procured, and money furnished. So ample and expensive was the equipment of this adventurer, and so small were the number of her followers who possessed the *means* and the *disposition* to furnish supplies, that the advances made by one individual, who had more money than sense, amounted to about a thousand dollars. It was now in the latter end of the month of June, the weather fine, the vessel taking in her lading, and our female Quixotte, having all her paraphernalia packed up, ready to be put on board, was daily watching with palpitating heart, the sweet breezes that gently fanned the bosom of the deep, and which were soon to waft her to bliss and terrestrial glory. A meeting of her followers was appointed to receive her benediction, and long farewell—when lo! a mischievous newspaper fell in her way containing an account of some military operations and skirmishes, with a detail of the killed and wounded, among the latter of whom was Major ——, Jemima's pretended lover. This intelligence was like a thunder stroke to Jemima, and at once blasted all the prospect of imaginary greatness and felicity with which her admirer had so successfully flattered her. The reading of this unwelcome news was no sooner ended than she rose from her seat, and retired immediately to her room, where she shut herself up, and freely vented her rage against her treacherous lover, in whom she now found she had trusted too far.

The mind of this woman was, however, of no ordinary cast; quick and decisive in forming her plans, cunning and persevering in their execution, and relying upon the credulity of her devotees, she was not long in devising the means of extricating herself from this unpleasant dilemma. A visitation and counter orders from Heaven would effectually do the business. But the mortification at the faithlessness and loss of her lover, and her fears of the consequences of her indulgent interviews with this son of Mars, sat heavily on her mind. She complained of ill health, and spent the evening until very late, in reading and reflection; and then throwing herself on her bed, without undressing, she directed two of her confidants to watch her during the remainder of the night; as her followers were to meet the next day to receive her blessing and parting admonition, this night was to be spent in preparing herself for the event. She continued several hours in deep meditation, laying perfectly still, with her eyes open apparently fixed in their sockets. About four in the morning, she rose and resumed her reading. When the hour of meeting approached, she attired herself with the utmost neatness and care, and repaired to the place of meeting where her cheated worshippers were waiting, in breathless anxiety, her august approach. Having seated herself, and rested a few minutes, Jemima rose and addressed her people in her usual style, expressing great tenderness and anxiety for their happiness, and exhorting them to be strong in the faith, and to be content with whatever was allotted them, adding that the Lord would provide for them, that they were the peculiar objects of divine care and protection, that the Friend had come among them to save from falling all such as had faith, and should persevere to the end. After much circumlocution she arrived at the critical point, the *vision*—" I have a message from Heaven for this people, therefore listen, and let thine .ears give head to what the 'Universal Friend of mankind' saith :—Last night, while reflecting on the labor of *love* which was about to be undertaken for the conversion of distant and precious souls, my mind became wearied, sorrow and sadness sat heavily on my spirits. Suddenly a ray of light from above shone with unutterable splendor, and illuminated the room,—an Angel from Heaven stood before me! and with a placid smile, and sweet voice pronounced these words: "Put off the journey which thou hast undertaken, the time of thy sojourning among the faithful, in this vale of darkness, is not yet accomplished: go meet thy people, and inform them that it is the will of the Lord that the Shepherd abide with the flock, that no evil come nigh unto them.' Here, my beloved, ye have heard the words of the Lord, the Friend will therefore remain with this people for the edification and strengthening of their souls."

This discourse, and the impious pretence that she spoke the words of the Lord, completely satisfied her deluded followers, and they retired more firmly fixed in their faith than before the getting up of this farce; and those who had parted with their money, finding themselves without any redress, were among the most ready and zealous in expressing their entire devotion to Jemima and her cause, in the hope, no doubt, that others might, in their turn, be as badly cheated as themselves. One of them, however, who had made the principal advances, was somewhat exasperated; he obtained a private interview with her, and reproached her with having deceived him, and told her that her intended journey was a mere pretence to obtain money, and that unless she restored him his own, he would abandon the society, and prosecute her to recover his due. But this wily actress so managed as to retain this wealthy member in her ranks, and, what was more to her purpose, to keep the money which she then had in her possession. After some altercation, they agreed to have the society so organized as that the property of all should be put into a general fund, and held as a common stock for the benefit of the whole; and that he should be appointed overseer and manager of the *temporal*, while she should devote herself wholly to the *spiritual* concerns of the society. As a large majority of her followers had little to give up, and therefore expected to better their condition, at least in this world, by a ready compliance, this plan was no sooner proposed, than adopted by the society. But the project was illy relished by those who possessed wealth, and did not choose to place it in the hands of an individual, over whom they had no control, and who could not be made accountable for the manner in which she might dispose of it; and Jemima, finding herself in danger of losing some of her most wealthy friends and supporters, so modified her decree, as that the members might put into the common stock whatever they pleased. This condescension of the *Friend*, removed all difficulties, and made those who did not think it prudent to part with their fortunes, extremely liberal in their donations.

In order to secure herself against want, Jemima adopted and carried into effect, one of the most bold and impious expedients, perhaps, ever practiced in modern times: whenever she wanted anything which she saw in the possession of any of her followers, she would send for them and say, "the Lord hath need of this thing," and strange as it may appear, it is not less true, that several persons, who have in latter years abandoned her society, have repeatedly declared that this demand had frequently been made on them, and that they had immediately complied with it, because they, at the time, verily believed in the divinity of her character, and dared not, on any occasion, disobey her commands. Jemima continued this practice, and almost uniformly enforced obedience, during the remainder of her life; and sometimes with such avaricious severity, that those upon whom these predatory requisitions were made, were constrained to part with articles which were extremely necessary to the comfort of their families.

She continued to travel about the country, and to preach wherever she could obtain an audience, and attempted to establish societies, but for a considerable time met with poor success. She at length, however, succeeded in forming a small congregation at South Kingston, and another somewhere in Connecticut, who erected meeting houses for her accommodation when she sojourned among them. She was always extremely jealous of the fidelity of her followers, and in continual fear of their falling off, especially the wealthy; accordingly every shift was resorted to for the purpose of securing their continuance in the faith. When her society in Connecticut erected their meeting house, she induced them to enter into a covenant by which it was provided, that those who left the society should forfeit their rights in the building, (which she denominated the "Temple of the Lord,") and that it should remain the property of those who continued faithful unto the end. In process of time, the members became scattered and fallen off, all but two individuals, to whom the property fell, by the conditions of the association, and they, it is said, sold the building to another society at a handsome speculation. But the *poor*, she was under no apprehension of losing; the common stock doctrine was sure to retain those whose adhesion was not so necessary to the advancement of her ultimate objects, and whom she always considered rather as a burthen than otherwise.

Jemima had negociated matches for all her sisters except Deborah, the youngest, and in some instances much above their rank. In this business she was so great an adept, that she found but little difficulty, even with respect to two of them who had previously become mothers without the sanction of those forms, which by the common consent of mankind, are deemed indispensible. The juggling of the Friend overcame all objections, and convinced the dupe of her hypocricy that it was his duty to become her sisters husband. She undoubtedly intended by similar means to provide for herself, whenever suitable opportunity should occur, but the unpropitious result of her attempt upon Major——, and the inconvniencies to which she had been thereby subjected, checked her ambitious hopes on the subject of matrimony, and being now somewhat advanced, having no one among her followers who would answer her purpose, and seeing no great prospect of splendid additions, she gave up the idea of marriage altogether.

Among the most important and useful of all of Jemima's proselytes in Rhode Island, was Mr. P. a gentleman of handsome fortune and high standing in his neighbourhood. He was very much devoted to the interests of Jemima, held her in the highest veneration, and entertained her with the greatest kindness and hospitality whenever she visited his family, a part of whom also became members of the society. Jemima finding his residence an agreeable one, so managed as to obtain his invitation to make it her home, which she very modestly accepted, and remained with him the principal part of the time for three years. During this period, and shortly after giving up her intended journey to England, Jemima secluded herself altogether from company, confined herself entirely to her apartments, and interdicted the approach of every one excepting two of her confidential female friends, who remained with her. At the end of about seven months, she again made her appearance in public, but so wan and feeble, as to leave no doubt, on the minds of those who did not choose to be deceived, as to the nature and necessity of her confinement. About this time, Jemima, at the instigation, and with the assistance of one Sarah Richards, who had recently joined the society, introduced into her creed a new point of doctrine, prohibiting matrimony among her followers, as unlawful and an "abomination unto the Lord." She preached this doctrine vehemently, and in the most positive manner required her unmarried disciples to suppress every inclination which tended to the commission of such an awful crime. Nay, she attempted to extend this tenet so far as to seperate those who had entered into wedlock before she had discovered the great iniquity of marriage, and while she was yet negociating matches for her sisters. But having been deceived and *injured* by her dear Major, and becoming disgusted with the idea of wedlock, her mind had now undergone an entire change on this subject. Her own disappointments had engendered the most bitter resentment, which she was illy able to conceal, while her envious temper tormented her jealous bosom at seeing others enjoy that felicity of which she had been cheated. There were also other reasons which undoubtedly operated strongly, on her mind, and had their full share of influence in bringing her to an open declaration of war against matrimony. The greatest part of her unmarried adherents were poor, and she did not wish to see that description of followers multiply on her hands, as they must necessarily be, in some measure, assisted from the common stock, which was at no time sufficient to satisfy her own avarice. She enforced, to the utmost of her authority, a rigid observance of her injunctions on this subject, and such was the unrelenting and tyrannical temper of this destroyer of human happiness, and so strong the delusion which she had already fastened upon her too credulous people, that few of her devoted followers dared to disobey her unhallowed mandates. Wives abandoned their husbands, and husbands their wives, in almost all cases where only one of them belonged to the society; many families were broken up for a season, and some entirely ruined, and the only relaxation from her stern decree, was, that where the husband and wife were both followers, they were permitted to live together; but even in these cases, she prohibited all sexual intercourse between them, under no less penalty than her displeasure in this world, and their eternal punishment in the next. In carrying into effect this project, she not only incorporated into her society the seeds of dissolution, but introduced indiscribable misery and distress into many of those families where her baneful influence predominated.

Jemima Wilkinson continued her ministrations to the regular congregations which she had formed, and to visit and preach at various other places in New England, where she could occasionally obtain an audience, but met with little success in adding to the number of her followers, or to the amount of their common stock; she therefore began to contrive plans for enlarging the sphere of her action and the extent of her influence. Besides, she began to fear the loss of some of her followers unless some new project could be hit upon to divert their attention from too close a scrutiny into her motives and conduct; she therefore, in consultation with a few of her confidential advisers, proposed to them a tour into the state of Pennsylvania, to endeavor to draw proselytes from the Quakers, who were numerous, wealthy and respectable in Philadelphia and its vicinity. This enterprise was readily assented to by them, and on their recommendation agreed to by the society, and the necessary preparations immediately made for the journey. She represented to the society that she had received a special mandate from Heaven to visit their distant brethren—that there were many Frinds in Pennsylvania who waited the coming of the Lord—that she must go and preach to them awhile, and that in due time she should return. She exhorted them to be steadfast in the faith, and to persevere unto the end, and promised eternal happiness as the reward of those who obeyed her precepts. She also recommende dpatience and meekness under persecution and afflictions, and whatever was allotted them cautioning them not to regard the scoffs and sneers of worldly minded persons, for those were they who had not the love of the Lord in their hearts. In this way she, in a great measure, fortified them against the reasonings and admonitions of their friends and prepared their minds to consider every thing as blasphemy and persecution which did not exactly comport with the absurd tenets which she had taught them. Having made every necessary preparation, she started sometime in the summer of 1782 for Philadelphia, taking with her five of her most useful and devoted followers. She travelled leisurely, and preached at several places on the way, and made advances towards the Quakers whenever an opportunity presented itself, but received very little countenance from them. On her arrival in Philadelphia, she immediately made herself known as the "Universal Friend of mankind," and gratuitously offered her instruction to all who were willing to come and hear it. Her followers who came with her were very liberal in their assertions in relation to this extraordinary personage, and rehearsed many marvellous stories about her death and resurrection, the evidences of her divinity, her power to heal the sick and raise the dead ; and averred that they had been eye and ear witnesses of all they had asserted concerning her. Her sudden appearance in the city, and the extravagant assertions of her companions, produced considerable sensation and curiosity, insomuch that she was soon accommodated with an opportunity of displaying her oratory. In a short time she became a very popular preacher, and attracted great crowds to hear her. Her auditors at length became so numerous that it was with great difficulty a suitable place could be abtained sufficiently capacious to contain them. An application was therefore made in her behalf to the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal St. George's Church, for the use of their building, which was granted her during her stay in that city. Jemima was now in her element, attended by a numerous audience, and preaching as often as suited her convenience, to thousands who admired the eloquence of the wonderful personage who had suddenly, as some of them supposed, burst upon mankind in a blaze of glory. She made a number of proselytes, excited much curiosity and astonishment, was treated with great attention and hospitality, and lived for a short time in considerable splendor. She however kept herself somewhat secluded, except when attending meetings, and suffered her presence to be approached only by her confidants and select visitors; she was therefore surrounded by a throng of idlers whenever she made her appearance in the streets. Under pretence of being incommoded by the multitude, she induced her friends to provide a carriage for her conveyance whenever she went out. Although most people of intelligence became satisfied or disgusted on hearing a few recitals from Jemima, and discontinued their attendance at her meetings, yet their places were supplied by others from different parts of the city, so that by a sort of succession of hearers her audience continned for some time undiminished. But at length her congregation began sensibly to decrease, reason triumphed in the minds of many, and curiosity became satisfied in others, and Jemima, by no means the last to discover these symptoms of desertion, and the reason thereof, suddenly took her leave of them, and removed her quarters into the country.

On the 19th of October, 1782, she arrived with her retinue at the house of a Mr. W., in the town of Worcester, in the county of Montgomery, about twenty miles from Philadelphia. The fame of Jemima had preceded her, and among the honest and credulous Germans at this place she found a ready and cordial welcome. By assuming the garb and apperance of meekness and modesty, and pretending to be zealous professors of religion, Jemima and her companions gained much upon the confidence of their entertainers; meetings were appointed and numerously attended. But Jemima, remembering the falling off of her hearers in Philadelphia, resolved to provide against a similar result here. She accordingly held her meetings very frequently, preached zealously, exhorted earnestly and prayed fervently; and withal took occasion frequently to deplore the necessity of her speedy return to her dearly beloved flock in Rhode Island. After a few weeks residence in Worcester, Jemima and her train took up their line of march for the land of their fathers, and so successfully had this crafty woman practiced upon the credulity of these simple and unsuspecting people that they really thought her some extraordinary personage, but, who, or what she was, they could not exactly conjecture; for she had not as yet deigned to inform them, in direct terms, that she was their Savior, although she had frequently thrown out hints that she was something more than common persons, and sometimes in the presence of particular individuals, she would speak of the "Lord's mercies," and the "Friend's favors," in the same conversation, and in such a manner as to leave their minds in doubt as to her real meaning. Many had become very much attached to her, and therefore on her departure supplied her with the means of prosecuting her journey with ease and comfort, a point always of the first importance with Jemima. Some accompanied her a day's journey, and many followed her with benedictions, and their prayers for the safety of her journey. On her return to Rhode Island, she found her societies there nearly in the same state in which she left them; a very few of the members had fallen off, but the most of them obstinately persevered in those errors which they had embraced and still believed, or were ashamed to acknowledge and abandon. Her people received her with those marks of joy which testified their zeal and constancy in her service, and were so eager to hear her preach again, after an absence of a few months, that Jemima held her public meetings daily for about a week, when their longings becoming somewhat satisfied, the old order of tdings was restored, and she found leisure to travel about the country and preach and practice her arts of delusion as formerly. In this business she had become a complete adept, and during the remainder of her residence in that country, practiced many impostures with the view of establishing a belief in her Messiahship, by which means she fully confirmed her credulous followers in the faith of her divinity; but the community at large believed her to be a poor miserable enthusiast, and being a female, they were more ready to pity her lunacy, than to attempt to disturb her or the society in the enjoyment of those opinions, which they *appeared* to entertain with sincerity. The impositions which she attempted to practice in working miracles, healing the sick, and raising the dead, and pretending to know by immediate inspiration from Heaven, the secrets of the heart, with many other abominable impostures, will be noted hereafter, when we come to speak more particularly of her doctrines and character, and her conduct as a teacher of divinity.

Jemima continued with her New-England followers until the summer of 1784, when she judged it expedient to make another visit to Philadelphia and Montgomery county. She had received letters from her friends at the latter place, urging her to return to them as soon as she could be spared from her beloved flock in Rhode-Island. She travelled by easy stages, stopped at several places to preach and seek for proselytes, and finally arrived at the house of her old friend Mr. W., in the town of Worcester, on the 2 th of August, 17-4, where she found a cordial and hearty welcome. This man was a very wealthy farmer, and possessed considerable influence in his town; and the countenance and protection which Jemima received from him, was of great service to her in prosecuting her plans in this quarter, and she failed not to avail herself of these advantages to the extent of her influence. She now proceeded to organize a society and establish rules and regulations for the government of the members. One of the farms of Mr. W. was wholly given up to her and the retinue which she brought with her, to cultivate for their subsistence; and the commodious and elegant stone dwelling on it became the mansion and residence of Jemima and her minions. They enjoyed the use of the premises, together with the stock and farming utensils, as if the property had been their own. Yet this did not satisfy these insatiable cormorants, for whatever Jemima wanted was almost uniformly extorted from the deluded members of the society, on receiving an intimation from her that "the Lord hath need of it." In levying these contributions, Jemima limited herself only by the ability and probable disposition of her followers to comply with her unhallowed and avaricious exactions.

During this residence in Pennsylvania, she frequently visited Philadelphia, and some other parts of the state, and was always furnished with carriages and attendants at the expense of her society. She now gave them to understand that she was intrusted with the execution of a special message from Heaven, and the old story of the death of Jemima Wilkinson, and the re-animation of her body by the Power and Spirit of Christ, was, with additional circumstances of mystery and solemnity, told to her wondering votaries, by her interested and well instructed confidants, who came with her from Rhode-Island, and who with one accord bore positive testimony to the truth of these extravagant and outrageous assertions. They were ready on all occasions to relate the wonderful miracles which she had wrought in their own country, and to which they had been eye and ear witnesses. As a farfetched story generally goes down better than any other, and as the great distance of the place, at which these performances were located, precluded the possibility of immediate detection, the relators were as bold in propagating these extravagant absurdities as their new friends were credulous in receiving them. Thus did this cunning hypocrite effectually fasten herself upon a considerable number of the unsuspecting inhabitants of Worcester, as a Prophetess, and in fact as a messenger from Heaven, in whose hands was the absolute disposal of their destinies, and led them to believe that their future happiness or misery depended on their faith in the divinity of her character and person.

Being now engaged in her favorite pursuit, and finding some symptoms of success, Jemima exerted all her industry and ingenuity to establish a society which should acknowledge her claims to divinity; in which she was much assisted by her creatures, whom she always kept about her person, and who acted as spies and listeners, carrying an account of whatever they saw or heard immediately to her. To prove herself entitled to their confidence, she pretended to know all the secrets of their hearts, and by her legerdemain soon convinced them of the fact.

Among those who visited her, some were prompted by curiosity, and others by a desire to learn whether she knew their secret thoughts; on their arrival, Jemima would retire to her private apartment, on the second floor, leaving her assistants below to receive them. Here they were engaged in conversation as long as circumstances required, during which time, Jemima's instruments drew from them as much of the history of their private griefs, or whatever was uppermost in their minds, as they could obtain, which was always carefully and specifically related to Jemima before she gave audience to her visitors. By this contrivance, she was generally enabled to satisfy them that she knew the object of their journey, what they had heard of herself, and in some instances, what they thought; and she was rarely liable to err when she informed them how much they were surprised to find her able to divine their cogitations without any previous conversation with them. By such tricks, and various others, in which her attendants were well instructed as to the part they were to act, Jemima made herself mistress of the affections and confidence of her submissive followers.

Having established a society, and appointed two of her most able managers to superintend its welfare, she, in the spring of 1785, returned to her old station in Rhode Island, after an absence of about nine months. On her arrival there, Jemima found some symptoms of decay; some had abandoned the society, and many were lukewarm, having almost recovered their senses. But by the activity and skilful management of their Priestess, the old order of things was soon restored She preached to them with increased animation, exhorted the faithful to persevere and the backsliders to return to their first love, and threatened the disobedient with the most terrible punishments. In the mean time, those who had returned with her from Pennsylvania, lost no opportunity of relating the wonderful things she had performed during her absence, and the flattering prospects of the new society she had formed in that country. By these means, she soon surmounted all difficulties, and rose in the estimation of her society still higher than before.

A correspondence was now opened between Jemima and her Ministers in Worcester, by which the most minute circumstance which occurred in either of these places, was instantly transmitted to the other. It therefore frequently happened, that the events of that period were known to the heads of these two societies before they came to the knowledge of the members, the substance of which was then stated to them by way of prophecy. This tended much to assist Jemima in keeping the ascendency in the minds of her followers, so that she managed her concerns for about three years very successfully.

But her agents at Worcester were not quite so fortunate They were younger (in jugglery at least) than Jemima, had less hardihood, and in passing off pretended mysteries and mummery they were altogether her inferiors. The society also, not believing them to be more than mere human beings, stood in less fear of their authority. The Society became less fervent in their devotion to the interests of Jemima, and less observant of the duties inculcated by her ministers, and some levity began at length to make its appearance among the younger part of the Society. Jemima was regularly informed of these circumstances, and from time to time forwarded instructions accordingly. But at length, fearing an entire overthrow of her power and influence, she sent out one of her sisters to supersede the old Managers; one of whom was ordered home to Rhode-Island. She came armed with orders to institute a fast among them, in order to humble their pride and bring them back to a sense of their duty. The instructions of this new Missionary were *privately* submitted to the principal and most influential of the Society, who were informed that she had also a dispensation from the Friend for such as had remained more steadfast in the faith, and steady in their practice, and that the fast could be graduated according to the merits and demerits of the members. They were accordingly classed off in detail, and ordered to fast, some three, some seven, some ten, and so on to forty days, upon a pound of bread and a pint of water per day. Particular care, however, was taken, to inform the wealthy and most important members, whom they did not dare to disoblige by too much severity, for fear of losing them, that the Lord knew their hearts, that they were faithful, and the peculiar objects of her love and affection, and that the fast, as respected them, was altogether dispensed with, excepting so far as they chose voluntarily to comply with it; but in order that all the members might be satisfied, and submit to the Friend's authority without murmuring, it was indispensably necessary that they should, to all outward appearance, conform strictly to the requisition, and not on any account suffer it to be known that this indulgence had been granted them. This important and comfortable communication was privately and *separately* made to the favorite few, and each being flattered with the idea that he was the special object of the regard and indulgence of so great a personage, tended considerably to increase their zeal in her service, and induced them to obey strictly the injunction to *appear to fast*, and at the same time to keep secret the fact that they *did not fast.* But those who were less favored were compelled for many days to subsist upon their scanty allowance; their strength became impaired, and their spirits broken down; they strove all in their power to make amends for past negligences, and convince the presiding Spirit of their entire devotion to the will and disposal of Jemima. This scheme was conducted with so much cunning and skill as to produce the desired effect. The members became more orderly, and evinced more devotion than formerly, and, with few exceptions, yielded the most implicit obedience to the management and discipline of their new mistress. From this time the government and instruction of the Society remained in the hands of the sister of Jemima until the third arrival of the "Universal Friend" in Pennsylvania.

In the mean time she superintended in person the concerns of her New-England flock, but with less success than formerly. She therefore, in conjunction with some of her most enterprising followers, set on foot the project of removing into the western part of the State of New-York, which was then a wilderness. Some funds were collected and arrangements made for effecting a purchase of new lands, on which to settle with such of her proselytes as were willing to follow her. In this enterprise Jemima exhibited more talent and mental forecast, than in any other act in her whole life. She had exhausted all her means of extending that delusion upon which alone she could rely for additions to her Society in that country, or even for retaining, for any considerable length of time, those who then belonged to it. The increase of education, the spread of useful knowledge, and the consequent enlargement of the human mind which had succeeded to the dark and gloomy period of the Revolution, had already checked the promulgation of her pernicious tenets, and threatened the final overthrow of her cause. To emigrate with her followers into an entire wilderness, where, as she supposed, they would remain for a long time without the means of ordinary instruction, and in a great measure cut off from a constant intercourse with an enlightened community, seemed more likely to perpetuate her dominion, and to promise the most probable means of rivetting the chains so effectually as to enable her to maintain her authority and secure for herself a support among them during the residue of her life.

The country being new and unsettled, wild and uncultivated lands were cheap: a small fund wou'd therefore enable them to purchase a sufficient body of land for the whole Society, besides a select tract for the particular accommodation of herself, which, as the country gradually settled, would become valuable, and in process of time constitute a handsome fortune. She accordingly exerted all the powers of her masculine mind for the accomplishment of this object, spoke in raptures of the delightful country of the Lakes, recounted all the flattering stories she had heard of the great fertility of the soil, and the extreme cheapness of the lands, called it the "New-Jerusalem" flowing with milk and honey, and dwelt with great earnestness on the comfort and satisfsction hey should enjoy on retiring from the sneers and scoffs of a vain world, where the wicked wou d "cease from troubling, and the weary find rest." By these arguments she easily prevailed on a *part* of the Society to adopt her plans The poor and needy, (about whom she cared the least) having little to fear from any change. were ever ready to follow her any where and on any conditions. Others feeling the awkwardness of their situation, an account of the strange whims which they had adopted, and being frequently hard pushed for arguments to support the opinions they professed to entertain, seemed willing to relieve themselves from the difficulty and trouble of thinking, by retiring to the forest, where they would have nothing to do but to cultivate the earth, and believe in the doctrines, and follow the directions of their leader. An attempt was made to raise a fund to make a purchase for the joint benefit of the Society. But with those whose acquiescence was most necessary, Jemima found more difficulty. Possessed of ample means of support for themselves and their families, and having long been accustomed to those enjoyments which a highly cultivated country, and an improved state of society afford, they were unwilling to forego these advantages and embark in an enterprise, the benefits of which were considered distant and uncertain. Jemima who was rarely ever at a loss in devising ways and means for the accomplishment of her purposes, soon hit upon an expedient by which the *one thing needful* was easily procured. One of her female coadjutors who had been left in charge of the Society at Worcester, had been recalled at or about the time Jemima sent her sister there. This woman had been residing in the family of Mr. ——, then Treasurer of the State of Rhode-Island, and a plan was laid and carried into execution, by these two worthy teachers of religion and morality, which enabled them to obtain a peep at the inside of the Treasurer's strong box, whence they took about two thousand dollars. The discovery of this robbery occasioned a great disturbance among some of Jemima's principal followers; search and inquiry were immediately set on foot, and Jemima fearing a criminal prosecution against herself, as a participator in the crime, absconded in the night accompanied by two or three of her followers. She made the best of her way to Worcester, in Pennsylvania, whither she had caused a part of the money to sent for safe-keeping, where she arrived in the month of December, seventeen hundred and eighty seven, with the residue of the booty. Messengers were immediately sent in pursuit—one of whom followed her to this retreat, where he overtook her almost at the moment of her arrival, and boldly demanded the purloined money, and threatened an immediate exposure unless it was instantly given up. Jemima denied all knowledge of the transaction with the most perfect composure and hardihood; but her pursuer being a resolute man, was not to be satisfied with her asservations—that she had the money he was certain, and he pushed the business of his journey with so much vigor and firmness, that Jemima was compelled to submit the house to an immediate search, under such restrictions as should effectually preclude the possbility of cancealing or removing the money. In this search, he found in one of Jemima's traveling trunks, eight hundred dollars, which she gave up without hesitation, alledging that it had been put there without her privity or consent, that it was not hers, that she knew not to whom it belonged, and if he claimed it he was welcome to take it. Finding no traces of the residue of the money, he returned to Rhode-Island, leavthis holy sisterhood to regret the failure, in part, of a scheme, in the execution of which, they had hazarded so much, and from the avails of which they had intended to purchase the land of promise. This was an unfortunate affair, as it invclved the reputation of two or three wealthy and respectable families, and in order to save the innocent from unmerited disgrace, it became necessary to let the guilty escape punishment. The business was therefore kept as still as possible, the balance of the money was paid by the friends of one of the persons implicated, and there the matter ended.

But the sudden and mysterious flight of Jemima produced great consternation among the *faithful.* They recollected the solemn admonitions and affectionate farewells with which she had, on all former occasions, parted with them when about to visit the distant brethren, and the appeals she had made to their sense of duty in regard to furnishing the necessary supplies for her journies. But now she was suddenly missing, and whither she had gone, or for what purpose, no one could tell—all was darkness, doubt and difficulty. The facts, however, soon transpired, and so disgusted many of her followers that they immediately abandoned the Society. Some few, however, were so credulous as to believe the story a fabrication of evil minded persons, for the purpose of persecution ; and others disbelieved that part of it which charged Jemima with any agency in the robbery. These retained their faith in her, and afterwards removed to

Ontario county, where they met Jemima on her leaving Pennsylvania. The Society in Rhode- sland was effectually broken up, the residue of the members fell off and became scattered, having no head or leader, Jemima not daring ever after to show her face among them.

Thus ended the career of this canting hypocrite in the State of Rhode-Island and its neighborhood, and with it. her ministrations to a deluded people, whose credulity she had practiced upon almost beyond belief, and whose characters and fortunes she had wantonly jeopardized, to gratify the most sordid and insatiable avarice. But her history is not ended. New scenes of mockery, intrigue, consternation and flight, yet remain to be described, in which it will appear, that instead of profiting by the indulgence shown her in her late dilemma, she was maturing new plans of imposture and fraud, for the attainment of the object which she had long pursued with unremitting industry and perseverance.

The gentleman who followed her to Pennsylvania in pursuit of the money, having secured what could be found, had no further business to transact with Jemima and her household, and they being willing to dispense with his company, he had immediately left them to their meditations. His visit was known to but few, and the object of it probably to none but Jemima and her confidants. This circumstance therefore made no impression on her Society there, who were much rejoiced to have the "Public Universal Friend,' (as they called her,) again among them; and when the story of her participation in the robbery, and her consequent flight, reached them, it had got so far from home, that it was easily contradicted and put down as the offsping of malice and persecution, and tended rather to strenghthen the bands which bound them to their folly, than to awaken a rational enquiry into the truth of an allegation of such a serious nature.

Jemima now enquired diligently into the state of the Society, and of the conduct and demeanor of the members, and having received a specific account from her ministers who had remained with them, was at no great difficulty as to the course most expedient for er to pursue. Several of the members had shown some symptoms of levity in conversation, for which Jemima lectured them, with great severity, and the more effectually to reform them, she ordered a "silent fast," which consisted in refraining from speaking or laughing for a limited time. This penance was, however, confined to the most garrulous, and was graduated, as to its duration, from one to three days, as suited the whim or caprice of Jemima.

Some of the poor deluded creatures, in attempting to comply with this requisition, afforded considerable sport, to those who did not belong to the Society, by breaking the fast. One woman in particular, who had been all her life accustomed to talk and laugh with impunity, and almost constantly, "broke her fast," as they termed it, several times, and had to begin again. Jemima at length ordered her mouth to be caled up with wafers and slips of paper, or linen rags. But with this help, she endured the dreadful privation but a short time, some amusing circumstance coming suddenly within her observation, she abruptly burst the bands of her slavery, reared into a loud laugh, and declared she would not again attempt to hold her peace three days, for the Friend or any body else. Jemima reprimanded her with great severity and gravity, and ordered her immediately to resume her penance; but to no purpose, she absolutely refused, and told Jemima she was a fool to think of preventing any woman from talking or laughing for three days together; which so enraged Jemima, that she gave her a most violent scolding, and sent her back to Philadelphia where she found her.

After Jemima had established her Society at Worcester, she made it her business to become acquainted with the private history of every family in the neighborhood. In the course of her enquiries, she learned that a woman who belonged to her Society, and who was a devoted follower, had given offence to her father by marrying against his consent, in consequence of which, he had, by his will, excluded her from any participation of his ample fortune, which, at his death, he divided equally among his other children. On becoming acquainted with these facts, Jemima laid a plan to obtain from them that portion which would have fallen to their sister, in case of equal distribution. As they were all members of the Society, she summoned them before her, and with an air of great mystery, informed them that in a vision the preceding night, she had seen their father, that he was in the regions of torment, suffering the punishment which had been inflicted on him for excluding his daughter from an equal participation with them in his estates, and that he could never be relieved from those torments until each of them paid her such sums, either in money or in property, as would in the aggregate, amount to an equal share of the estate he had left among them. She was also particularly requested to state to them, that the old gentleman had appointed her guardian and trustee to their sister, and that it was his express will and direction, that they should pay the amount to her for their sister's benefit. This last part of Jemima's message, which from its very nature would have disclosed the cloven foot to any person of common sense who was not under her fatal influence, was rendered plausible by the pretext that if the amount was paid to their sister, her husband, from whom she had parted on joining the Society, would claim the possession of it; and it was still the old gentleman's *will*, that Philip, his daughter's husband, should never have a farthing of his property. She then descanted largely upon the solemn obligation which they were under to do all in their power to redeem their parent from those dreadful torments to which he was then subjected, and effectually convinced them, that to refuse to comply with this requirement, would subject them to a like punishment, for continuing the injustice which had been done to their sister. The consequence was, that they immediately compounded, by paying to Jemima the amount required, and in a few days after, they received from Jemima the joyful news, that their father was relieved from his thraldom, that his soul was at rest in the regions of bliss, and had sent his blessing to his dutiful children, who had so promptly contributed to his relief.

Philip was a barber by occupation, and resided in the city of Philadelphia, and although he had not been heart broken at the loss of his wife on their first parting, yet now that a due share of her father's fortune was paid her he thought her worth looking after. He soon after made a visit to Worcester, in the expectation of prevailing upon her to return and live with him; but Jemima understanding perfectly his intentions, and not feeling disposed so soon to part with her ward and give an account of her guardianship, kept the woman out of his way, gave poor Philip a rude reception, and after lecturing him violently, sent him back as rich as he came. He afterwards made various attempts to obtain an interview with his wife, but Jemima was too cunning, and always found means to defeat him. She always entertained the hope, that as long as the woman remained with her, he would not commence legal proceedings against her to recover the property; but if her disciple left her, and returned to her husband, there would be no excuse for detaining it, and she would be obliged, in order to keep up aven the outward appearance of common honesty, to account for all she had received, which by the by she was determined never to do.

Philip was highly enraged at the treatment he received from Jemima, and threatened her with a prosecution for harboring his wife, and also for detaining the property. These threats gave Jemima a great deal of uneasiness, and kept her in constant dread of "*persecution*," as she alledged, but in fact, it was *justice*, and the punishment which her misconduct merited, which she stood most in fear of, and she soon after absconded in the night, in consequence of receiving information that her arrest and punishment was meditated by those who had suffered by her knaveries. The history of this flight is somewhat interesting on account of the ludicrous circumstances which led to, and attended it, and the awkward situation in which it placed Jemima. It also proves clearly the hypocrisy of her professions of religion, and betrays on her part a consciousness of guilt, which casts upon her moral and religious character, a deeper and more indelible stain than could have resulted from almost any other combination of circumstances, or the testimony of a multitude of witnesses. Her society was numerous, and some of the members wealthy, and all were so devoted to her cause, and so deeply interested in supporting and protecting the character and welfare of the Society, with which those of Jemima were inseparably connected, that had she been arrested, they would have spared no pains or expense in defending her. Of this disposition on their part, she had already received ample proofs, and had she been innocent, she would have boldly met her accusers, and triumphed in their defeat, which would have added greatly to her consequence with her own people, and to her public character as a divine.

A young woman of good family and connection in Philadelphia, having previously been attached to Jemima, and believing her sincere in her professions of religion, had left her family and friends, and joined the Society at Worcester. She was an intelligent and interesting person, and one from whose influence Jemima calculated to receive much assistance It was therefore of some importance to Jemima to retain this person in her Society; but from the integrity and correctness of the principles in which she had been educated, Jemima foresaw that if she was too suddenly let into the mysteries and secrets of the cabinet, and virtue her sense of duty would take the alarm, and occasion her to abandon them altogether. Great pains were therefore taken to prevent her from discovering the true character of this worthy sisterhood, and the motives which governed their conduct. But the utmost art of Jemima could not long impose upon her understanding—she plainly saw through the specious veil which had concealed a system of hypoc isy, impudence, and avarice, and being disgusted with the indelicacy of their conduct in private, and shocked at the impiety of their pretensions in public, she resolved to leave them altogether. When this was made known to Jemima, she strove all in her power to induce her to change her determination, offered to give her the second station in the Society, painted in glowing colors the fortune they would make by settling in the Lake country, the ease and comfort which they would enjoy through life, explained to her the means by which she governed the Society with absolute sway, and represented that they were so devoted to her, that they would not only provide for the support of herself and household, but would clear their lands, which in time would become valuable—that a large congregation of her disciples would arrive in that country from the eastern states, who together with those that would follow them from Pennsylvania, would compose a very large Society and form an immediate settlement of a considerable tract of country, and that her friend, if she would remain with her, should enjoy a full moiety of all these advantages and privileges. But it was all to no purpose; the arguments and offers by which Jemima attempted to retain in her company this virtuous woman, tended only to open her eyes to the dangers with which she was surrounded, and to the frauds by which Jemima had controlled her deluded and cheated followers. She therefore without further ceremony or delay abandoned the Society, and returned to her friends in Philadelphia.

Jemima experienced much inconvenience from the loss of this woman. She durst not denounce her as an apostate and reprobate, for she had trusted her too far and without doing this, she could not account for her secession to the satisfaction of the Society, without jeopardising her own character; and besides, she still entertained hopes that her friend would return, and embrace the flattering offers which had been made her. She therefore permitted little to be said on the subject, and for a long time the major part of the Society supposed she had gone on a visit, or on some mission from Jemima. In the spring following, however, Jemima determined on making an effort to recover her lost friend. For this purpose she despatched two of her most trusty and able negociators to wait on her, and endeavor to induce her to return to the Society. On the arrival of these messengers at Philadelphia, they disclosed to the lady the object of their visit, accompanied with all the flattering prospects and promises which Jemima had authorised them to hold forth, and adding how greatly she was beloved by the Society, how much her absence had been regretted by them, and how necessary her return was to their comfort and happiness. But she was not to be won by these professions; she had become effectually weaned from her personal friendship for Jemima, and now abhorred the abominable practices by which she governed her spell-bound adherents; and moreover, knowing somthing of Jemima's temper, and suspecting treachery, she would not again trust herself in the power of one who she considered capable of any thing which promised success to her schemes of avarice and ambition. She also thought it extremely unfortunate for her followers, that they should be thus imposed on, by the wiles and machinations of a person who was so totally unworthy of their confidence. She had heard the story of the robbery in Rhode-Island, and was not altogether ignorant of Jemima's participation in the nefarious transaction. She also knew the history of her difficuties with Philip, the barber, and that she was in constant fear of a prosecution from him. She therefore conceived the idea of alarming Jemima on these subjects, and thereby precipitating her removal to the western wilds before she could mature her plans for taking her Society with her. Accordingly she listened patiently to the proposals of her visitors, and then in a very polite and friendly manner informed them, that she could not return with them--that although she had a great affection for the Society, yet she had concluded to remain with her friends, and as a testimony of her gratitude for their friendship and kindness, she would give them a piece of information which had come to her knowledge just before their arrival, and which was of great importance to them all, and particularly to the "Universal Friend." She then informed them that Philip, the barber, had organized a large party, and engaged the Sheriff and Constables to accompany them to Worcester to bring away his wife and arrest Jemima, and bring her to Philadelphia, and that after punishing her for harboring his wife and detaining their property, he intended to deliver her over to the Sheriff of Providence, who, she said, was then in the city, waiting an opportunity of catching Jemima to carry her back to Rhode-Island, to take her trial for stealing the money found in her trunk on her last arrival at Worcester. She said they had gotten every thing in readiness, and would start the next morning, and therefore begged her visitants to return with as much expedition as possible, and inform the Friend of the danger which awaited her.

This unwelcome news so alarmed these two noble embassadors, that they immediately mounted their horses, and returned in full gallop to apprize their dear mistress of the impending danger. The stone house was instantly in an uproar---Jemima sent for her friend Mr. W. whose funds, teams and carriages were at her command on all emergencies: he ordered up a wagon and horses, and about midnight Jemima and two of her female coadjutors, with their baggage, under the care of a trusty driver, started for *their* "New-Jerusalem." Conscious gilt, and the consequent fear of punishment, rendered these fugitives almost frantic. Jemima in particular, who had the most to fear, constantly urged the driver to push his team, nor would she permit him to stop a moment for rest or refreshment. They had a noble span of horses, and so diligently and vigorously did they prosecute their flight, that by 7 o'clock the next morning they arrived at a creek called Bushkill, a distance of fifty miles from whence they started. But here a sad accident happened, which very nearly cost the lives of the whole party, and effectually put an end to their journey.

This creek, though a small one, had been swollen by recent rains, and now the rapid current filled its banks and rendered the passage of our travelers altogeter impracticable. On their arrival they halted for a moment, and called to an old man who was standing at a little distance from the opposite shore, and enquired whether they could ford the creek in safety? to which he replied in the negative; but misunderstanding his answer, and being goaded on by the fear of pursuit, they immediately entered the stream. The horses began to swim, the party became alarmed, and Jemima, in an agony of vexation and fright, ordered the driver to stop the horses, which was no sooner done than the front wheels and axletree separated from the residue of the carriage, which, with the cargo, floated down the current, while the driver and horses turned and came out of the water near where they had entered. The women scrambled out of the carriage, and one of them seized the friendly branches of a little willow which overhung the water, and drew herself to the shore. The driver plunged into the stream on one side and the old gentleman on the other, and with great hazard and difficulty saved the other two. When they brought Jemima to the shore she was senseless, and it was not without great exertions that they could resuscitate her. In the interim, the trusty driver, who was also a disciple, and the two female companions of Jemima's flight were in great perplexity; they began to apprehend that the spirit, which, according to the creed of the Society, had re-animated the body of Jemima Wilkinson, and which was to continue therein and reign a thousand years, had taken a permanent flight, and had left them the difficult task of accounting for her sudden exit consistently with the character which they had ascribed to her. Their fears and sorrows however soon gave way to gladness and joy—Jemima began to exhibit symptoms of returning life, and their perseverance was at length crowned with the happiness of seeing her open her eyes, and hearing her inquire, in faint and tremulous accents, *what country they were in?* They carried her to the house of the hospitable stranger, where she was taken such care of as her deplorable situation required, and his scanty means could furnish. The driver, with the assistance of the neighbors, regained the carriage, but the baggage of the travelers was almost entirely lost.

Jemima had lain so long in the water in a state of insensibility that her health was materially affected; she was altogether unable to travel, and was therefore compelled, notwithstanding the fears which racked her terrified mind, to postpone the further prosecution of her journey until the next day.

And here we will leave this worthy group, to the full enjoyment of those sensations which the adventures of the night, and the disasters of the morning, were calculated to produce, and the return to our friends at Worcester, who by this time are beginning to stand in great need of our immediate attention.

Among the early followers of Jemima, was a young woman by the name of *Sarah Richards*, who had left her husband and joined herself to the sisterhood. This person had been left in Rhode-Island, as a sort of administratix to arrange the unsettled business, both temporal and spiritual, of Jemima, which from the suddenness and secrecy of her flight, she had left in rather an unlucky predicament. Having hastily patched up matters as well as circumstances would admit of, Sarah had followed the footsteps of her mistress, and taking Philadelphia in her route, had arrived at Worcester the same day that Jemima did at Bushkill. Sarah, on learning the circumstances of Jemima's *second* flight, was in as great distress as the others had been the night before, not however from the same cause. Having passed through Philadelphia where all was quiet respecting Jemima, and the Sheriff not having made his appearance according to expectation, she saw clearly that it was all a mere farce--a hoax got up to test the power of Jemima to divine the secrets of men's hearts. Her object, therefore, now was, to get any information to her as soon as possible, and to hasten her return with all convenient speed, to assist in devising some mystery which might so cover the disgrace of her shameful flight, as to save appearances wi h the Society, and prevent that defection among them which a full developement of facts was calculated to produce. For this purpose she applied with great earnestness to their old friend and supporter, Mr. W. But this man now for the first time, exhibited some symptoms of sanity as respected Jemima and her pretensions, since his acquaintance with her. His fortune, which was ample, had become considerably impaired, and his business deranged, partly by neglect and partly from the enormous expenses to which, on her account, he had been subjected. Jemima had made her approaches to the mind and the purse of this unfortunate enthusiast, with such skill and address, and increased in her exactions so imperceptibly, that he had never found a convenient place to stop at until she had laid the foundation of his ruin. During the last residence of Jemima at Worcester, she and her household had subsisted entirely on his means. They enjoyed the use of his best dwelling, two of his farms with all the stock and utensils, and had in their employ the principal part of the time, from twelve to fourteen of his horses, with saddles, harness, carriages and wagons, without money and without price, and which they used with far less care and economy than is usual with the owners of such property. The clothing of Jemima and her principal women, was purchased almost exclusively with his money, and was of the finest and most expensive kind.

By these means he had become involved in debt, and now began to experience difficulties to which he had not previously been accustomed. These sat heavily on his mind, and the shock which his faith had received, on witnessing the frailty and flight of Jemima, had almost determined him to abandon her interests, and take care of his own. But Sarah Richards was persevering and vehement in her importunities. She painted in glowing colors the hardships and dangers to which the Friend would be subjected, by hurrying, without any previous preparation, from the walks of civilized man to the haunts of savages and wild beasts—the total overthrow of her influence among her Society, which was then large and flourishing, the dishonor which would be brought upon her cause, in which he was interested in common with herseif, and reminded him of the disgrace which would attach to him in the eyes of the Society, if he permitted her to proceed after the deception had been detected; and morover flattered him with the prospect of the great advancement which Jemima would vouchsafe to him, provided he would once more exert himself for her benefit and relief; and so successfully did she appeal to his alternate hopes and fears, that the old gentleman at length began to waver, and finally consented to go in pursuit of the unfortunate fugitives. He mounted his best saddle horse early the next morning, and at evening alighted at the house of the honest old man, who had contributed to the preservation and restoration of Jemima, and who was now heartily rejoiced at the prospect of being soon rid of his mendicant visitors. Jemima was much surprised and alarmed at first sight of her old friend, but a moment's explanation dispelled her fears and raised her drooping spirits. She extolled the goodness of her friend, gave him her warmest thanks for all his kindness, and particularly this last instance of his disinterested zeal for her welfare, in return for which she promised him future happiness without measure.

The next morning the little party gathered up the remains of their baggage, which had been saved from the flood, and started for Worcester, whither they arrived the same evening, worn out with anxiety and fatigue. Jemima confined herself to her room until the Sabbath following, when she was obliged to appear in public and preach to the Society. But a great difficulty now arose: how was she to explain to her Society her unceremonious departure, and equally sudden return? The occasion of her journey too, and whither she had been? These were subjects upon which she knew her followers would expect information, and upon which she felt very little inclination to be communicative; and moreover she and her two companions had unfortunately lost their beaver hats, and had not had time to replace them with new ones, and they had always been accustomed to sit in their public meetings with their heads covered. Her skill was put to the severest test; but her prolific mind soon devised the means of surmounting all difficulties. The teamsters and women who shared with her the fatigues and dangers of the journey, were charged to give no answers whatever to any inquiries which might be made on the subject of the journey, but to meet with a silent frown, every inquisitive word or look, and leave her to give such an account of the circumstances as she thought proper. When the meeting assembled, they found Jemima and her confidants with their heads bare, a circumstance which excited the wonder and compassion of her followers, and the sneers and significant looks of the rest of her audience. She preached to the meeting as usual, exhorting them to "run with patience the race set before them," and to be strong in the faith, and cautioned them against prying into matters that did not concern their future welfare. The circumstances which occasioned her flight, and the untoward accident which terminated her journey, were known to but few, and these being interested to silence, the whole assumed an air of mystery and began to pass off without much danger of exposure, and in about two weeks the Society settled down into the old beaten track, and began to wear the aspect of prosperity and contentment. But from a circumstance which might easily have been foreseen, the whole riddle was unfolded, to the no small chagrin and mortification of Jemima and the faithful; and to the great amusement of the unbelievers.

The party on leaving Bushkill had offered a reward of ten dollars for the recovery of the three beaver hats, (the original cost of which was about thirty dollars,) and had left directions where the owners resided. The old gentleman at whose house Jemima had tarried after her ducking, on making diligent search, after the flood had subsided, found the hats, and now made his appearance claiming the reward. But they had lain so long in the water that they were nearly ruined, and Jemima refused to pay the stipulated bounty; and being now safe in the old stone house, fearing no danger from the furious current of Bushkil, she could easily dispense with any further acquaintance with the good man, from whom she had nothing further to expect; she therefore ordered him to be dismissed without even vouchsafing him an audience. This so enraged the old gentleman, particularly the refusal to pay the promised reward, that he proclaimed Jemima's perfidy and ingratitude, together with a full history of this ludicrous adventure, throughout the whole neighborhood, and along the road as he returned home. However ungrateful this conduct might be considered on the part of Jemima, yet it was no less impolitic, as it occasioned a full development of her unfortunate and precipitate flight, under circumstances not very honorable to her character either as a moralist or a divine. Her followers were somewhat staggered in their belief of her divinity, and those who understood her true character, tauntingly reminded them of the proverb "the wicked flee when no man pursueth," &c. But Jemima was very grateful to her old friend Mr. W. for his signal services, in sending her off when she was in the agony for fear of an immediate arrest, and also for his promptitude in pursuing to bring her back, when it was discovered that no harm was to be apprehended; she therefore, as the only reward she was able to bestow on him, loaded him with promises of prosperity in this world, and happiness in that which is to come, and omitted no opportunity of holding him up to the Society, as an example of disinterestedness and fidelity worthy of imitation.

The cause of her sudden flight was known to but few, and these were enjoined secrecy, so that after awhile the idea became current in the Society, that she had been a journey on some important mission for the advancement of the general concern, and about which, they were given to understand, it did not become them to be too inquisitive. In this way her people soon became satisfied, and their affairs and business again resumed their former character and complexion. Jemima however retained her malevolence against her former friend, by whom her peace had been so much disturbed, and finding that she could not again get her into her clutches, and having no other means of punishment for her, she now denounced her as a reprobate, against whom the doors of mercy were effectually closed, and cautioned her followers against falling from grace and favor as this wicked woman had done; but she never thought fit to inform them of the trick which had been practiced upon them by her.

Sarah Richards was now promoted to the dignity which had been intended for her lost friend, was made prime minister to Jemima, and charged with the direction of the temporal concerns of the Society, a post which had been held at various times by differnt persons, but which Sarah occupied during the residue of her life. Some few of the Society who had never evinced much devotion, but who had attended her meetings merely for convenience or curiosity, now saw through the thin veil in which the real character of Jemima was shrouded; they most heartily ridiculed the farce recently acted by her and her favorites, and discontinued their attention to her altogether. But on this, as on former occasions of miscarrige in her projects, her devoted friends ascribed her ill luck to the malice and persecution of evil minded persons, who were determined to destroy their religion, and break up their Society; they therefore redoubled their zeal and exertions in testifying their unequalled confidence in Jemima, and devotion to her cause; so that in a little time, she became as firmly seated at the head of her flock, at Worcester, as she could have been had the circumstances of her late adventure never transpired. The concerns of the Society were satisfactorily arranged, confidence was restored, and peace and tranquility returned.

Those of her Society who had followed her from Rhode-Island, were employed in cultivating the farms which were appropriated to their use, and domestic drudgery of the household; while Jemima and three or four of the sisterhood, whose assistance in devising *ways* and *means*, was always necessary to her, were occupied in contriving schemes for the good government of the flock, and in arranging matters for their emigration to the Lake country.

In the month of April, 1789, every thing being arranged, the necessary provisions, clothing and money being furnished, Jemima took her last and long farewell of the town of Worcester, and bent her course for the land of promise, accompanied by a few of her followers, her trusty cabinet, council, baggage, &c. &c.

In order to induce her followers and friends to accompany her into the wilderness, she had labored for several months with the utmost assiduity, frequently mentioning the subject in her public discourses and evening sittings, and on all occasions when matters of business were at all discussed; and never failed to paint the scene in the most captivating colors. She called it the "New Jerusalem," the "land of promise, flowing with milk and honey;" where the faithful would enjoy every gratification without interruption or molestation; where their hopes would be realized and their fears banished; where they should meet with a reward for all their toils, their sufferings and troubles; where they should be relieved from the scoffs, the sneers and ridicule of the servants of the devil; where the world's people could not come among them, or disturb their repose; in short, where peace and tranquility should reign uninterruptedly, their wants be provided for, and their utmost wishes gratified to the end of their lives. These high wrought descriptions, together with the information these people had received from other sources, respecting what was then called the Genesee country, operated powerfully upon the minds of many, and occasioned considerable emigrations from that neighborhood about this period and for some time after.

Jemima and her retinue travelled by land to Wilksbarre, on the Susquehannah river, where they chartered a boat, in which they came from thence by water to Newton, (Elmira,) in Tioga county. She had agreed to pay the boatman a stipulated price, besides the services of two young men, who came with her, to assist him in setting his boat against the current, which was of consequence to him, as he needed a greater number of hands in ascending than in descending the river. On their arrival at Newtown, Jemima and Sarah Richards conspired together to cheat him out of a part of the stipulated price, by charging him twenty dollars for the services of the two young men, and by refusing to pay him any thing unless he would allow that charge. The boatman, indignant at such an unworthy contrivance, threatened to prosecuted Jemima and Sarah immediately, unless his account was paid in its fullest extent. They thereupon called the young men into a private room, and informed them that the boatman had agreed to allow for their services, twenty dollars out of the price for bringing the cargo, and that they expected to prove this fact by them. But they told Jemima and Sarah, that they had understood the bargain to be precisely as stated by the boatman. This reply was instantly silenced with a severe frown and positive contradiction from Jemima, and they were ordered to go immediately to Mr. S. (the only magistrate then in that part of the country,) who lived about a mile and a half distant, and to inform him that the boatman was endeavoring to cheat Jemima, and to state to him, that if a prosecution was brought they would swear, on the trial, that for *their services* a deduction of twenty dollars was to be made for the price originally agreed on. This injunction of these two profligate women, was enforced in the sternest manner, and with a threat of their utmost displeasure should they, in their statement to the magistrate, fall short one tittle from the instructions they had received.

The parents and friends of these unfortunate young men, had belonged to the society for many years, and they themselves had been educated in the faith of Jemima's creed, had been with her and in her employment almost from their infancy, had been taught to yield implicit obedience to her commands, and had been sent on with the Friend and her retinue, to assist them on their way. They were now about eighteen years of age, totally inexperienced, in a wilderness, far removed from succor, and altogether dependent upon Jemima for support; to retain which they were required to perjure themselves, in order that she might succeed in the attempt she was now making to defraud the honest laborer of his hire. Their reflections were therefore not of the most pleasant kind, as they pensive pursued their way towards the magistrate; and what heightened their perplexity was, that both were determined never to perform the task assigned them, or any part of it, and each was at the same time ignorant of the other's thoughts, and was afraid to break silence for fear his companion should not agree with him, and he should therefore be turned adrift, alone and in a wilderness. But to quit Jemima together, in case of extremity, would be far less distressing than to perform what she required of them. Having travelled some distance, they seated themselves on a log by the way side to rest; after exchanging a few significant looks, one of them said to his companion, "I had rather go back than to proceed any further;" and to his great relief, the other immediately reciprocated the same sentiment, and thereupon an explanation took place between them. They proceeded, however, and called on the magistrate, who received and entertained them very hospitably—gave them a good dinner, and answered all their enquiries respecting the new country. They then returned to their mistress, with a full determination to leave her instantly, if she censured them for disobeying their commands. On their arrival, Jemima enquired as to the success of their mission, and received for answer, that they knew very well that the boatman was entitled to his money, that they had not troubled themselves or the magistrate on the subject, and that she might settle with him as she pleased, but must not call on them as witnesses. Jemima immediately told them to say nothing further on the subject, and she would pay the rascal and let him go about his business, which was instantly done, and there the matter ended.

Jemima in a few days after found means to convey her goods and chattles to the tract of land, which was purchased for her about this time, in the neighberhood of the Seneca and Crooked Lakes, where she had the pleasure of meeting with a number ot her disciples and followers from Rhode-Island. From this time forward, considerable accession to the Society took place, by the emigration of her friends from New-England and Pennsylvania, until their numbers were estimated at about a hundred souls.

In looking back through the career of this extraordinary woman, it is worthy of remark,that by her extravagance, her deceptionsand frauds, she nearly ruined her best friends and most wealthy followers, both in New-England and Pennsylvania.

The gentleman, in whose house she for a long time resided, in North-Kingstown, and from whom she received the greatest hospitality and kindness, found himself so embarrassed, and his affairs so deranged, after the elopement of Jemima from that country, that he was obliged to sell his plantation, to extricate himself from his debts and difficulties. The robbery of the treasury added much to those difficulties, for Jemima had so managed that business as to implicate a connexion of his family in that foul transaction, to save whom, and the credit of his friends, he was obliged to repay the money, with the exception of what was found in Jemima's trunk at Worcester. This gentleman collected together the wreck of an ample fortune, and with his family removed to the County of Ontario, near the Crooked Lake, soon after she absconded from Rhode Island. With Jemima's devoted friend, Mr. W. of Worcester, it fared still worse. Hurried on from one step to another, without sufficiently reflecting upon the consequences which must necessarily ensue, the foundation of his ruin was laid before he was aware of it. His property was dissipated, his business deranged, and himself loaded with debt which he could not discharge without sacrificing his real estate which consisted of three very large and valuable farms, in a high state of cultivation, and capable of yielding a handsome revenue. After striving for nearly three years to redeem his shattered fortune, he at length sunk under the pressure of his embarrassments. He disposed of all his property, and with the little pittance that remained after paying his debts, followed Jemima to the "land of promise." The embarrassments into which many others were led, in consequence of their connexion with this Society, compelled them to dispose of their property, and retire into the new country, where lands could be obtained cheap, and where by industry and economy, they have since obtained very handsome estates.

Jemima gave that part of the country in which they settled, the name of Jerusalem, and lost no time in organizing her Society under the old discipline, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing her prospects begin to brighten. From the wreck of the two old Societies, and the few additions from the early settlers in her neighborhood, her followers became more numerous, and being far removed from the means of religious instruction, excepting what her teaching afforded, they were more easily governed, than at any former period of her ministry.

They generally purchased lands, and held them in their individual rights, each being the separate possessor and owner of whatever he brought with him or afterwards açquired. The common-stock project was abandoned, and instead thereof, *voluntary* donations and contributions were substituted, and paid in money, labor, cattle, and other personal property, according to the ability and inclination of the members of the Society.

Sarah Richards had some money of her own, which, together with what Jemima had obtained by pretences and practices which need not be again described, was laid out in the purchase of lands, and some donations in lands were also made, so that the tract selected and purchased for Jemima and the sisterhood, amounted to about fourteen hundred acres. This tract was extremely well chosen, being in a healthful and pleasant situation, the lands having generally an eastern and southern aspect, finely wooded with the sugar maple, occasionally interspersed with the majestic oak and lofty pine, and the soil of the first quality for agriculture. As it suited the convenience of Jemima to *appear* to have nothing to do with matters of business, and to have her attention altogether turned from worldly to spiritual concerns the deeds for these tracts of land were executed to Sarah Richards, who was to be considered the trustee of Jemima and the sisterhood.

Sarah continued the ostensible owner of the property, and had the general direction of the business of the establishment, which was conducted in her name, until her death, which happened in the year 1794. At her death she willed the principal part of her property to *Rachel Malin*, a respectable young woman who had resided some years in the family of Jemima.

The Members of the Society purchased their lands in severalty, and located themselves where the situation and quality of the soil suited them best, without regard to the immediate vicinity of their mistress. The lands selected for the accommodation of Jemima were situated on a gentle declivity near the head of the west branch of Crooked Lake, and about twelve miles west of the Seneca Lake. She remained among her followers until a dwelling was erected and sufficient improvements made to enable her family to support themselves without an immediate reliance upon the members of the Society. Her household now consisted of Sarah Richards and her daughter Eliza, Rachel Malin, and four or five male and nine or ten female domestics, in all about eighteen persons. These servants were men, women and girls, who had, in the excess of their devotion, given themselves entirely up to the governance and control of Jemima, doing all her drudgery both within and without, being content to receive for their services a mere subsistence in addition to the happiness of being near the beloved Friend.

Besides the assistance she derived from the labor of these persons in clearing and cultivating her farm, she received donations in labor every year to a considerable amount from the other members of the Society. In fact it was, for many years after their settlement in Jerusalem, a standing rule among them to turn out and gratuitously plant and hoe the Friend's corn, sow and reap her wheat, and cut and gather in her hay, even in preference to attending to similar concerns for themselves. On these occasions they were accustomed to meet on a day appointed, bringing with them their provisions and teams; and it was often a matter of emulation amongst them who should be on the ground first in the morning, insomuch that it happened not unfrequently that even those who had several miles to travel, arrived by the time it was light enough to commence their labors. The moment their work was done, they retired quietly to their respective homes, taking care to give Jemima no trouble or expense, nor by any means to convey the idea that she had received any thing to which she was not entitled, or that they had done ought but their duty. There is not to be found, perhaps, in the annals of human society, an instance of such strict, uniform and persevering fidelity and devotion to any leader, as was shown by these people to Jemima. Whatever inconsistencies or absurdities they might be guilty of in other respects, in this one thing they were uniform and consistent. As to the motives or incentives which induced them to the constant acquiescence in, and performance of, these duties, it would be difficult to determine, and is perhaps not material; but it is a fact, that their conduct in this respect, (if in no other,) corresponded precisely with their professions, so that to be thought even tardy in their performance of these tasks was considered by themselves as derogatory to their character and standing in the Society. In this manner Jemima's interests were promoted, and her wants provided for, according to the plan she had originally laid on turning her attention tc the Genesee country. She derived a great advantage also from another circumstance, which was probably a strong inducement to her to attempt removing her family and Society into the wilderness. It turned out as she had correctly anticipated, that the early settlers in many parts of that country were for a long time deprived of the ordinary means of religious instruction or of educating their children ; she therefore had time effectually to confirm her followers in the belief of those tenets which she had taught them ; whereby she was enabled to govern them with uncontrolled sway, and to draw from them the means of an easy and comfortable support, during the residue of her life.

Shortly after settling in Jerusalem, Jemima conceived the idea of converting the Indians to the faith of her divinity, and on several occasions made advances towards them for that purpose. Had she possessed or pursued any rational system of religious and moral instruction, her attempts to civilize and christianize them would have been praise-worthy, and success in her labors would have benefited this unfortunate race of human beings. But considering the nature of the faith in which she would have instructed them, it may be considered problematical whether they would have gained much by her teaching.

When the treaty was held with the Indians at Canandaigua, she repaired thither, and while the Commissioners and their assistants were engaged with the Sachems and Warriors in deep consultation, she suddenly entered the Council Hall, and without any previous notice or introduction, commenced praying most vehemently. The abrupt enterance of Jemima, and the temporary suspension of business, gave great umbrage to the Indians, who testified their impatience and dissatisfaction, by sneers, frowns and grimaces. The Sachems and head men of the tribes, were not accustomed to interruption in their deliberations, particularly from women. Those of minor consideration, who took no part in the negociations, together with the squaws and pappooses, were busily examining and admiring blankets, knives, beads, jewels and other trinkets, brought here as presents for them, and about which they cared much more than for Jemima's prayers. Her presence was therefore exceedingly offensive to them all. Having ended her long prayer, or rather harangue, she attentively surveyed her auditors, in order to discover what effect it had produced upon then; but her mortification was equal to her disappointment, on finding that the moment she ceased speaking, the assembly resumed their business without taking the least notice of her or her company. She therefore left them immediately, and returned to her much beloved and far more deluded followers in Jerusalem, pondering deeply upon the ungracious reception she had met with, and vainly endeavoring to divine the causes of that obstinacy which she had discovered among the poor Indians. To gain their attention and confidence had been with her a favorite object since her arrival in the country, and she had accordingly embraced the first opportunity. Her ill success in this enterprize, did not, however, discouraged her from making a further effort. These people were mostly ignorant of the principles of the christian religion—were fond of novelty, and by perseverance she might gain their confidence, and in process of time inveigle them into a grant of some of their valuable lands. She would moreover gain great celebrity by converting the savages, and in that way, add considerable to her remown as a prophet. For these or some other reasons, perhaps equally cogent, she determined on embracing the next opportunity for a similar attempt.

The treaty which was held by the Indians at Newtown, was attended by a deputation from the Oneidas, a considerable party of whom traveled by water, and in passing up the Seneca Lake they encamped and spent the Sabbath at a place called Norris' Landing, in the immediate neighborhood of a part of Jemima's settlement. She seized this opportunity of preaching to them, and in the course of her address, attempted to persuade them that she was Jesus Christ, their Savior. The audience listened to the speaker apparently with great attention. When she had finished her discourse, one of their party rose and delivered a short and animated address to his countrymen, in their own language. Jemima having seated herself beside the Interpreter, who accompanied the Indians, desired him to explain to her the language of the speaker. When the Indian had ended his discourse, he enquired of the interpreter what the conversation had been between him and his white sister, and on being informed that she had requested an interpretation of his words, he fixed his eye sternly upon her, and pointing his finger, said in broken English, "Me think you are no Jesus Christ if you don't know what poor Indian say—he know what Indian say as well as any thing," and immediately turned contemptuously away from her, and neither he nor any of his party took any further notice of her.

Whatever ideas these people might have entertained on the subject of religion, they had too much sagacity to believe in a Savior who could not understand their language. This occurrence has been minutely detailed here, because the substance of it has been related with many variations; and the detection of Jemima's imposture by the cunning of an Indian, who addressed her in his own dialect, has been erroneously ascribed to the celebrated Indian chief Red Jacket.

As the settlement and cultivation of a new country increases the value of wild lands, those who possessed prudence and forecast readily perceived the advantages which would result from securing to themselves as extensive tracts as their means would enable them. This subject was understood by no one better than by Jemima, nor was any one more eager to profit by the early acquirement of freehold estates. But as her funds were nearly exhausted, and the contributions hereafter to be expected from her followers were to be paid in labor and specific articles, it was extremely difficult for her to raise money for making new purchases. A variety of expenditures were therefore resorted to, with the view of adding to her dominions, in which she met with little success. It happened, however, that in one or two instances, considerable bequests in landed property were made to her by her followers, to whom she had access during their last illness, but from the want of legal skill in those who drew the wills, and their reluctance to call in the assistance of professional men, these grants were inoperative, and the lands afterwards descended to the heirs at law of the testators. In one instance, an extensive and valuable tract of land was willed to the "Universal Friend's Society;" but as this Society, not being a body corporate or politic, was incapable of receiving a grant, the heirs of the donor, some years after his decease, went into possession of the premises, and Jemima, on consulting her Counsel, and finding she had no title to the property, either at law or in equity, abandoned her claim to one of the best speculations of her whole life.

Sarah Richards possessed some lands which she had purchased, and held as private property, independently of, and unconnected with, the estates which she held in trust for Jemima, the latter of which she devised by her will, to Rachel Malin, and the former to her daughter Eliza. Some time after the death of Sarah, Eliza Richards becoming disgusted with the monotenous and slavish service of her mistress, sought refuge from the tyranny of Jemima, in the arms of a husband—which so exasperated the old lady, that, notwithstanding her former obligations to Sarah Richards, and the fondness and friendship which she had professed for Eliza, she became from that moment her irreconcilable and deadly enemy. After interdicting matrimony among her followers, she had always considered the marriage of any of her disciples as an act of separation from the Society, and as a fall from grace, and denounced them as heretics accordingly. But in this instance, it was not the mere violation of one of the fundamental articles of her strange creed which excited her enmity; she had placed her avaricious eye upon the property of this unhappy orphan, and fondly hoped to retain her under her charge until she arrived at an age which would enable her to convey her lands, when she intended, by threats or flattery, to induce Eliza to add her inheritance to the fortune of the "Universal Friend." But the marriage of this person effectually frustrated her schemes, and placed the property forever beyond her reach, unless she could invent some new fraud whereby she might obtain possession of it.

The Will of Sarah Richards was still in her possession, and an attempt was made so to alter it, as to divert the devise from Eliza to another person. A controversy afterwards arose in relation to some of the property mentioned in the Will, which rendered its production at the trial necessary, when the alteration was detected, which would have destroyed its validity, had not that alteration been adjudged to be in itself immaterial. Thus the *ignorance* of those who undertook this forgery saved Jemima from the loss of what was really intended to be given her.

Although she *pretended* to devote herself entirely to spirltual concerns, and to be altogether abstracted from the business of this world, yet her appetite for gain was probably as sharp as that of any other person. Indeed, such was her avarice, and so irregular was the manner in which her secular concerns were conducted, that she became involved in a variety of legal controversies, and the last sixteen years of her life were spent in a continued series of litigation. The suits, it is true, were neither prosecuted nor defended in her name, yet it is not to be supposed for a moment that she was not the real party litigant, or that it was not her interests exclusively which were to be injured or promoted by the result. It would perhaps be unreasonable to suppose her always in the wrong, or that chicanery was not sometimes resorted to by her opponents, in these contests for property. But the cunning and management of this crafty woman, and the blind devotion of her disciples, were such that had she understood the legal effect of instruments in writing, the forms of law, and what was necessary to be proved, as well as she did the government of her flock, she must have been a most potent adversary to contend with. Indeed it has been often remarked in her vicinity, that whenever she could anticipate what was necessary to be substantiated on an approaching trial, she was sure to furnish the means, from among her followers, to prove it. The propriety and force of this remark will be at once appreciated by all those who have attended their trials for a series of years, and seen the gross perjuries which have been committed by interested and stubborn witnesses. Oaths, it is said, have become, in latter years, much cheapened, and from the great multiplicity of cases wherein they have been rendered necessary by law, their sanctity has probably been much impaired. But with some of the followers of Jemima, it appeared to be a matter of course, to affirm (swearing being prohibited by their religion) according to the directions which she gave them. It happened not unfrequently, that she would summon before her those whom she intended to employ as witnesses on an apapproaching trial, and detail to them, with the utmost minuteness, the facts and circumstances to which they must affirm; and, in order that they might be able to remember, and attest distinctly to all she had instructed them to say, she would compel them to repeat their lesson to her, until they could do it with sufficient exactness and fluency to answer her purpose. Moreover, to strengthen them in the belief, that it was their duty to testify as she had bidden them, she would state to them, that they *must know* that the facts were as the Friend had told them, that they had "the word of the Lord for the truth of them," and that they need not be afraid of men, who would not hurt them for testifying as she directed them, that "man could, at most, only kill the body, but the Lord could kill the soul."

The effects of this cabinet dicipline have been often seen on the trial of causes in which the "Friend," or some favorite followers, was interested. On one of these occasions, a young woman, belonging to the Society, was produced as a witness, who affirmed to the existance of certain facts which, if true, would entitle the defendant, who was also a follower, to a verdict. To rebut this evidence, a sister of hers, who did not belong to the Society, was sworn, whose testimony was in direct contradiction to that of the other, and was so strongly corroberated by that of other witnesses, and a variety of circumstances, as to satisfy the audience of the truth of her statement. Yet such was the hardihood and determined purpose of the defendant, and such the preparation which had been made to meet all emergencies, that he introduced the mother of the two witnesses to prove that the one who had testified against the interests of the defendant was so great a liar that no reliance could be placed upon any thing she might say. This graceless task the unblushing and unfeeling mother performed with apparent satisfaction, and with such eagerness to blast the character of her daughter, as to destroy, in a great measure, the effect she intended to produce, and to disclose most clearly the foul means which had been resorted to for the purpose of enabling the defendant to escape justice. This must undoubtedly have been the opinion of the Jury, as they, without difficulty, returned a verdict for the plaintiff.

On another occasion one of the *faithful* was drawn as a Juror into a very important cause, depending against one of the brethren, on a promissory note given by him for a debt of Jemima's. This man was apparently near sixty years of age, and one of the most venerable and holy looking men in the Society. His grisly beard, his hard and weather beaten countenance, his broad drab coat, with huge pockets dangling against his thighs, and long slouch underjacket, approaching his knees, seemed to look down from their proud eminence upon the wicked worldly fashions with which they were surrounded; and together with his sanctimonious longitude of face, were sufficient to convince a stranger that he had not committed a solitary sin in more than half a century. On answering to his name, he was objected to by the council for the plaintiff, on the ground of his having declared his opinion that "the note upon which the suit was brought was a forgery,"--that "the defendant was not indebted to the plaintiff," and that "the plaintiff ought not to recover a verdict against him." Old Primitive was then put upon his affirmation, and interrogated by the Chief Justice as to his having made such declarations, or any others of a similar import, to all of which, he promptly answered in the negative, with a steady and firm voice, with unvarying features, and rigidity of countenance which resembled the face of a brazen immage. The Juror having thus purged himself of all biass and prepossession touching the matter to be tried, the Judge overruled the objection, and the plaintiff thereupon submitted to a non-suit, rather than proceed in the trial with a man on the jury who was predetermined never to agree to a verdict against the defendant; and the next day the Grand Jury (then in session) presented a bill of indictment against old Primitive, for perjury, committed by him in answering to those interrogatories, which indictment was founded upon the oaths of three gentlemen of respectability for veracity, who heard him make all those declarations not two hours before he was called upon and denied them under the sanction of his affirmation. On the trial of this indictment, the miserable old man made a technical escape from justice, being acquitted in consequence of the non-production of a record of the cause, pending the trial of which the perjury had been committed.

To detail all the various litigations and controversies in which Jemima was embroilod for many years, some of which remained unsettled at the time of her death, would be a tedious and almost endless task. Enough has already been stated to show that notwithstanding all her *pretentions* to abstraction from worldly cares and considerations, she possessed an almost insatiable thirst for wealth, without much regard to the means by which it was to be acquired.

It was the custom of Jemima, in the early part of her career, to preach to the flock twice in each week, besides attending on funerals and other extraordinary occasions. Her stated days for holding meetings were Saturdays and Sundays, the latter of which was considered more particularly as sacred time, and strictly observed as such; but Saturday was treated as a day of relaxation from business, to attend meetings, hear lectures and moral discourses the better to prepare their minds for the more solemn devotions of the Sabbath; but they were not required to abstain altogether from secular concerns. On her settlement in this country, however, she pretended to discover that the seventh day of the week, or "what the world calls Saturday," was the real Sabbath, and that part of time which ought to be kept holy and occupied exclusively in exercises of piety and devotion. This she said was revealed to her immediately from Heaven, in a vision; the strictest observance of this new item in her creed was therefore required; yet she still held public meetings on the Sabbath, "in compliance with the customs of the world." She also instituted "evening sittings," as they were called. These were held every evening in the week, or as often as the members chose to assemble at her house. On these occasions liberty was given for any one to speak who felt disposed; but it rarely ever happened that any of her tribe would venture to preach in her presence, so that generally their "evening sittings" broke up without a word being said by any one of them. These were called "mute meetings," and were, without doubt, extremely edifying, for by persevering in an uninterrupted silence for an hour together, an excellent opportunity was afforded for reflection and contemplation, while they were in no danger of being led astray by the mistakes of their teacher.

Having succeeded in establishing a Society, respectable in point of numbers, who were devoted to her interests, and unconditionally submissive to her authority, and having acquired a considerable landed estate, which was daily becoming more valuable by cultivation, and by the rapid settlement of the country, Jemima now found herself in an elegible situation, and would doubtless have wished to remain on earth, to enjoy the fruits of her fatigues and hazards, for a thousand years. The produce of her farm, together with the constant donations from her supporters, enabled her to live in perfect ease and plenty. Her house was constantly supplied with all the necessaries and some of the luxuries of life. She had many visitants, among whom were sometimes strangers of distinction, who having heard of her fame from afar, called to gratify their curiosity, or to become acquainted with a person who had been the subject of much speculation and enquiry. There she never failed to entertain with the greatest hospitality, and always strove to impress them with favorable opinions of herself as a divine, and her attentions and exertions on such occasions were generally graduated according to the rank which she supposed her guests held in Society. The expenses to which her establishment was thereby subjected, were provided for by her followers in due proportions, according to their means, without a murmur, as they considered it an honor done the Society to have the Friend visited by people of rank and standing in the world.

Jemima continued to preach to her followers regularly until a short time before her death, holding meetings statedly at her own house, and occasionally traveling into different parts of the settlement to accommodate those who lived at a distance. In these excursions she usually rode in her carriage, attended by some favorite of her little community. In the latter years of her life she remained much at home, and sometimes secluded herself altogether from company, excepting her confidants and select visitors. She grew fleshy and corpulent, and at length became affected with the dropsy. Her natural love of ease together with the fatigue of traveling, occasioned her to lay aside her usual excursions among the faithful, and her bodily exercises, which had never been great, were nearly discontinued. Her malady increased apace, and for more than two years previous to her death she endured much pain and distress. To consult a Physician was beneath the dignity, and inconsistent with the character, which she had assumed, and at her advanced age but little hope could be entertained of arresting the progress of a disease of so formidable a character. She resigned herself to the fate which she considered inevitable, and patiently waited the event; being probably more anxious to perpetuate a belief in her divinity than to protract a lingering and miserable existance. The pleasures of youth and the enjoyment of riper years had fled forever; and the evening of her days had not brought with it those consolations which a christian enjoys in a retrospective survey of a long life, devoted to the care and instruction of his children, the exercise of charity and benevolence, and to the acknowledgment and service of his Redeemer. But she bore the pain of her disease with surprising fortitude, and made it a point never to complain or show the least impatience (in the presence of visitors) on account of what she suffered. Her whole system had now become effected, and every symptom strongly indicated an approaching and speedy dissolution. Yet such was the delusion of her infatuated followers, that they would have been more easily persuaded that the final consumation of all things was at hand than that the life of their Idol was drawing to a close. To the usual enquiry "How does the Friend?" they gave the foolish answer, "the Friend is *weller*," for as Jemima was, in their opinion, as *good* a being as they had any knowledge of, it would be profanity in them to say she was *better*. They admitted that "the tabernacle which the Friend inhabited" was deranged and disordered, but denied that she was sick or would die, and exhibited evident symptoms of impatience and vexation whenever the probability of such an event was mentioned to them. With Jemima, however, the case was far different. She knew full well the course of human nature, and that like all mankind she must die, and her body moulder in the grave, the house appointed for all living. She was aware that her whole system was pervaded with disease, and that deaths' approach, though slow, was yet regular and certain, and had already seized the vital parts. The day preceeding her death, she stated to those about her, that she must soon leave them. Towards evening, finding herself fast failing, she again said, "My Friends, I must soon depart—I am going—this night I leave ye." She died about 2 o'clock in the morning of Thursday, the first day of July, 1819.

A few of the more intelligent part of her flock had expected that her disease would terminate her earthly career, and were prepared for the event. They therefore admitted and lamented the "departure of the Friend." But the major part of them could not, and did not believe she was dead, or that she "had departed," until compelled by the reality ; nay such was the enthusiastic devotion of some of the faithful, that when they were informed that Jemima was dead, they denied the fact most stoutly, and disdainfully repelled the idea as an insult offered to their understandings, and to the deity they worshipped, and said the Friend would "live to see all the wicked cut off from the earth." So great was their zeal and faith in her cause, that they started immediately to go and visit the "beloved," and inform her of the injustice dcne her by these evil reports which the wicked had raised against her. But on their arrival, and meeting the awful reality in such a manner as to preclude the possibility of evasion without denying the evidence of their own senses, they were utterly confounded, and the vacant stare and mute astonishment depicted in their countenances, betrayed their perplexity, their doubts and their fears. And when their powers of speech returned, they lamented, in doleful accents, their unprotected condition, said they were like sheep without a shepherd, and knew not what to do—that they had entertained no apprehensions that the "beloved" was about to leave them, or that the Friend intended to depart and withdraw her protection from them. But to allay the fears and remove the doubts of these miserable devotees was no very difficult task, and the means of producing this effect were already prepared. As a part of her creed, Jemima had taught her disciples to believe that she was something more than a mere human being, and in order to secure their respect and adoration of her memory after her death, it was necessary to perpetuate that system of faith and practice in which they had been educated; and two or three of the most crafty members of this holy sisterhood were interested in lending their assistance to accomplish this desirable object; hence it is not improbable that the explanation relative to her "departure" was previously prepared to suit the present occasion. These worthies accordingly received their wondering fellow followers with as good a grace as possible, and informed them that the Friend had suddenly and unexpectedly left them, that they were exceedingly sorrowful thereat, but it was their duty to be resigned to the will of the Lord, "for the beloved Friend knew what was best for them, that she had a right to depart, and that they must not repine." And moreover that the "beloved had not in fact left them, her spirit had only left the tabernacle of clay which it had inhabited, and was still with them, and ministering unto their wants and spiritual necessities, and would secure their final and eternal happiness provided they should obey her precepts and continue firm in the faith unto the end." This most comfortable explanation answered the end for which it was designed. They were exceedingly rejoiced on learning that their "dearly beloved friend was not a mere mortal woman, as had been vainly imagined by a wicked world," their fears and doubts were immediately removed, their faith renewed, and they again settled down into their former stupidity, determined to persevere unto the end, and await in sullen silence the salvation which Jemima had promised them.

Jemima had given orders that her body should be kept as long as possible, four days at the least, before they "laid her away," for as to burying her, that idea was altogether inadmissable. The body was placed in a coffin, in the lid of which was inserted a pane of glass, so that the face could be seen without opening the coffin. The members of the Society were allowed access to the room, where she was lying in state, for the purpose of taking a last and lingering look at the "Friend's face," until Friday evening, when the corpse became so extremely offensive that they were obliged to remove it into the cellar, after which none but the Cabinet Council were permitted to approach it. On Saturday a considerable number of people assembled at her late residence, in the expectation of seeing the corpse, and of joining in the funeral solemnities; but in this they were disappointed; the religious exercises were performed and the assembly dismissed as usual, without any allusion to the death of Jemima, her funeral or interment; and those whose minds had been occupied on these subjects, retired as wise as they came. On Sunday the followers again assembled, and, as an expectation generally prevailed throughout the neighborhood that the last sad duties of the living to the dead, would now be performed, a great concourse of people attended. Among them were several persons of the Quaker denomination, some of whom, being moved by sympathy and benevolence, had traveled a considerable distance to visit this Society in their present affliction. But these people needed not their condolence or their company; they considered them as spies, or drawn together from idle curiosity, and exhibited strong symptoms of vexation and jealousy at the attendance of so many strangers, and plainly intimated that they would much rather have been left to "manage their own affairs in their own way." The Quakers were particularly obnoxious to them, and were treated with much rudeness.

Jemima had been repulsed in all her advances towards them, in the early part of her career, and having succeeded in forming a sect of her own, and fearing that an acquaintance and intercourse with them would, from the similarity of some of their manners and customs, tend to incorporate her people with the Society of Friends, and thus sap the foundations of her independent government, she had taught her disciples to look upon them with contempt and abhorrence. On the present occasion this temper was particularly manifested; they refused to hold any communion with them, and those who wished to see and speak with the friends of the deceased were put off with feigned excuses and frivolous pretences. All the rooms in the house except the "public meeting room," were locked, and every thing visible wore the aspect of gloom and mystery. Some of the visitors enquired the cause of such treatment to strangers, to which they replied "we have obeyed orders"—"we have orders for all we do." As this was one of their stated days for worship the rules of the Society could not be dispensed with. The person who preached on this occasion was one of the most garrulous sisters of the whole tribe, and she, with the view, no doubt, of wearing out the patience of the audience, continued speaking as long as she could find any thing to say, nor did she then give up the point, until by repeating her vagrant ideas and cant phrases many times over, she was driven to silence by fatigue and exhaustion.

When the usual exercises were ended a desire was expressed by some of the audience to hear one of the Quakers preach, and as no accommodation was allowed them in the house, they assembled under some shade trees hard by, when the speaker rose and delivered an eloquent and affectionate address, and concluded with a fervent prayer. The assembly were much pleased with the discourse and prayer of this stranger, and expressed their satisfaction to each other, saying "surely these are the words of truth and soberness." These indications of approbation disturbed the composure and excited the jealousy of the leaders of the Society, and one of them rose and inveighed most bitterly against the Quakers, and among other things said she had foreseen in a *vision* the coming of these strange people, that they had been sent by the devil to bring discord and confusion among the faithful, and that she was sure they would be cursed in the next world, and she hoped she should live to see them cursed in this.

One of the Quakers requested permission to see the corpse, and on being refused, observed "it is of no great importance, she was nothing more than mere flesh and blood like the rest of us, and is now a mass of inanimate clay, as we all soon must be." The followers of Jemima were greatly disturbed and enraged at this remark, and said to one another, "is it possible?" "can it be?" "abominable!" "we did not think it possible!!" "but now we hear it, with our own ears we hear it said, that the 'Universal Friend' was nothing more than mere flesh and blood like common persons!!!" These and many other exclamations were made by them, showing most clearly, that they considered it blasphemy to speak thus of their Idol. The concourse of strangers who attended on Saturday and Sunday was not only a great annoyance to the Society, but very probably prevented the working of any miracles which they might have had prepared for the occasion, and they therefore separated mutually dissatisfied and disgusted.

After the assembly had dispersed, the principal managers of this farce consoled their adherents with the idea that they were the favored disciples of the Lord, that they were numbered with the faithful, and that if they continued steadfast through all their trials and sufferings, they should receive a crown of glory from their "beloved," who, they said, was not dead, but had only departed for a season, and would in her own due time vouchsafe a most glorious manifestation of herself unto them, and give them a final and triumphant victory over all their enemies.

The circumstances which transpired among this infatuated people during the four days next following the death of Jemima, although apparently of little moment in themselves, have been stated with some minuteness, because this is an important epoch in the history of their Society, and because those circumstances are of a piece with that system of mock mystery and imposture upon which that Society was founded and kept together, and upon which the successors of Jemima (for there are a plurality of them) rely for maintaining their authority and influence over the deluded members. If they could succeed in reconciling the followers to the idea of her *departure*, as they call it, and convince them that she had not died, but that she had only removed herself from their presence, yet that her spirit is still with them dispensing her ministrations to their wants and necessities, and like a guardian angel constantly engaged in the care of their souls, with the power and intention of finally securing their eternal happiness; if they could succeed in stupifying the members of this Society into a belief of these things, then they might calculate upon enjoying, for a season at least, their authority over them, and upon receiving from them that homage and devotion which had formerly been paid to Jemima. And upon this hypothesis only, can we account for the strange conduct of the leaders of this sect at the time of the decease of their mistress. No death—no mortality—-no funeral—-no burying—-nothing that should in itself indicate an acknowledgement on their part that she was not a divine person, or that her body was mortal, and had suffered the stroke of death. On the contrary "the beloved Friend has departed"—-" the Universal Friend hath left us"—"the shepherd hath left the flock"—" the body hath gone to a place prepared to receive it." A gloomy and inveterate silence prevails, except when questions are asked, and these are answered with tartness accompanied with an intimation that they are considered impertinent and offensive. This farce is kept up until the night of the fourth day after the death of Jemima, and then the body is missing, and the place where they have interred, or rather *hidden* it, is known only to those who are intrusted with this cabinet secret, which they are not permitted to disclose. Whether the principal managers in this mystery gave assurances to their people that Jemima would rise on the fourth day, or whether they induced them afterwards to believe that she had then risen, we are not positively informed; but certain it is, that many of the followers did most firmly believe that she would rise at that time, and ever since have been, or pretended to be, certain that she did rise accordingly, and the secret manner in which the body was disposed of was well calculated, and was undoubtedly intended, to establish and perpetuate such a belief.

Jemima was always extremely fond of dress; when young she used frequently to say she would not go to church or meeting unless she could appear as well or better dressed than any other girl in the congregation. On turning her attention to serious matters, she was less anxious, but far from being indifferent about her apparel. After pretending to die and rise from the dead, she changed her fancy in this respect, and instead of following the fashions which had before been her pride and glory, she adopted a sacerdotal habit, more suited to the dignity and nature of her employment yet as to the richnes of her clothes her pride was in nothing abated. The finest linen and silks and super-royal broad cloths were not too good for her, and were never dispensed with but through necessity. Thus apparelled she could unblushingly preach patience and humility, frugality and industry, and condemn pride as a foul sin to her gazing throng, who with coarse raiment and homely fare, were yet content, with the sweat of their brow, to minister to her vanity and extravagance. A part of her pride consisted in dressing after a fashion entirely her own, which resembled neither that of men or women. She wore an under garment with long sleeves, wristbands and collar, and a large cravat about her neck--petticoat and slippers; a vest cut sloping to the right and left from the centre, a kind of coatee dress similar to a lady's riding habit, the upper part buttoned, and cut sloping below, so as to show the edges of her vest, and ever the whole a long robe of black silk or white sattin; and in public she always appeared with a huge black beaver turned down at the sides and tied under her chin with a ribbon. She wore no head dress, having her fine black hair combed and dressed in several sets of curls and ringlets, which by frequent wetting and oiling were kept as smooth and glossy as a raven's wing, so that with a fine complexion, a regular set of features, masculine countenance, a commanding air, and a liberal stock of assurance, she had the appearance of a personage of no ordinary character. These advantages together with her portly mein, her austerity towards her people, and the belief on their part that she knew their private thoughts, rendered them as obsequious and submissive as spaniels, and enabled her not only to exercise her authority in many instances with great severity, but to practice impositions upon their understandings, with a success altogether unaccountable. She not only kept them at an awful distance at her own house, but even when she traveled among them to visit or preach, she always had apartments assigned her where she tarried, into which no one, not even the proprietor of the house dared to enter without her permission.

The condition of most of Jemima's followers, as members of the intellectual community, has always been most wretched. With the exception of a few who received a competent education before they joined the Society, they are extremely ignorant, a trifle of learning, hardly enough to enable them to transact the ordinary concerns of life, being deemed not only sufficient, but as much as was safe for them to aspire after. Her teaching was to them the most profitable, and did they but believe and obey her precepts all would be well with them.

Her followers in New-England amounted, at one time, to about two hundred, a part only of whom followed her to this country; since which they have never been computed to exceed one hundred and fifty. Of these a great many have abandoned the Society, and some have died, while of late years they have received no additions; their numbers have of course been decreasing very fast, and at the time of the death of Jemima there remained only about forty who still adhered to the faith, all of whom are considerably advanced in years. This society will therefore probably pass away with the generation that gave it birth.

There are about a dozen old men and

women belonging to the household, all of whom are single. They attached themselves to Jemima in their youth, and such was their infatuation, that they gave themselves away (as they expressed it) to the Friend, relinquishing every other prospect and enjoyment for her service, yielding themselves up soul and body, and making themselves bond men and bond women, to wait upon her, and do the slavery of her kitchen and the drudgery of her farm, without the hope or expectation of any other reward than a transient smile of their "dearly beloved," and the scanty support she allowed them, together with such provision for them in the next world as she thought they deserved. These domestics stood in great fear of Jemima, and when she was at hand were always orderly and submissive. But when she was absent they often quarrelled, and sometimes pulled caps most lustily. They are now worn down with age and hard service, and some of them are almost helpless. Their support during their lives is provided for in Jemima's Will.

Among these domestics, there was formerly a woman of the name of *Anna Styer*, who sometime after joining the Society became partially deranged. Finding her troublesome and of very little service to her, Jemima shifted her off upon one of her followers, and enjoined it on him to provide for and take care of her, for "the Friend did not want to be troubled with her." As this man was to receive no other compensation for his trouble and expense in the care and support of his ward, than what he could derive from her labor, he attempted to reduce her to the condition of the most abject slave. Having been taught obedience to Jemima alone, and not understanding, or being unwilling to acknowledge the transfer of authority from her old mistress to her new master, she became still more troublesome and refractory, for which he frequently corrected her with great severity. This increased her obstinacy and probably her malady, and her *kind* guardian thinking that she would never be of any service to him until "the devil was whipt out of her," gave her one morning a most cruel and merciless beating. This poor miserable object immediately fled. Her mind was disordered by the strange fantasies which she had heard promulgated in the school of Jemima, and finding herself cast out from the presence of her "dearly beloved mistress," from whom, at the time of consecrating herself to her service, she expected never to be separated, and now writhing under the tortures of the lash of the inhuman master, to whose *tender* care she had been consigned, despair seized the remains of her shattered intellect, and she hastened to a sequestered spot in a narrow valley hard by, which was deeply shaded by the interlocking branches of the peaceful and silent grove, and there put an end at once to her griefs, her sorrows and her sufferings. Search being made a day or two after, she was here found hanging to the limb of a tree. This occurrence gave Jemima a great deal of uneasiness, and very much alarmed the *good* man who had *charitably* undertaken the support of this unfortunate woman. For although they might be in no danger of a judicial investigation, yet the cruelty and ingratitude of which she had fallen a victim, might excite the compassion of the followers, and operate injuriously to Jemima's interest and reputation. To excuse themselves and suppress enquiry, the story was told with many exaggerations as to the insanity of the deceased, and a total denial of the brutal treatment which had produced the sad catastrophe.

By her last will and testament Jemima bequeathed the estates real and personal to Rachel Malin, who is also charged with the support of these helpless old men and women out of the same. Rachel is said to be a humane benevolent person, and a judicious manager ; it is therefore probable that these unfortunate creatures will be as well taken care of and provided for under her superintendance, as they were at any time during the life of Jemima.

The remnant of this Society still retain their habits manners and customs, and assemble for religious exercises as formerly. In filling the office of chief speaker and leader of the sect they will probably find some difficulty, that perferment being resolutely contended for by three rival candidates, two of whom being sisters of Jemima, rest their claims on their consanguinity to the former incumbent, and their competency to discharge the duties of the station.* The other competitor for supremacy has equal claims on the score of talents, and has moreover rendered some important services at an early period of the Society. How this struggle for superiority will terminate, is very uncertain, and equally unimportant.

Jemima appeared very desirous, towards the close of her life, to clear up her character in relation to several things which had been charged against her. Whether she had become ashamed of some of the impositions which she had practised in the early part of her career, on finding she could enjoy the benefits of them but little longer, or whether she had actually forgotten them, we are not authorised to say. But it is certain, that she took much pains and embraced every opportunity to deny them. She was visited, about two or three weeks before her death, by a female acquaintance of hers who had known her ever since she commenced preaching, but who had never been a a follower. On this occasion Jemima talked much of herself and her "ministry," and appeared anxious to impress her visitor with a favorable opinion of her, to convince her of the injustice done to her by the wicked, and of the trials and sufferings which she had endured for the good of mankind, and her resignation to whatever fate awaited her. "I have," said she "been four and forty years wandering up and down, and preaching to an unfriendly world. I was sent from above to do the work of the Lord—the great work which none other could do. This work I have patiently accomplished, though with many trials and much suffering. If the Lord hath anything more for me to do, I am willing to remain yet longer, and go through a further pilgrimage on earth to accomplish the will of the Lord. But if it is the will of the Lord to take me, I am resigned to his will, let the Lord's will be done. What I have done is the work of the Lord, and will stand—''till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.'* But the children of the devil have attempted to destroy the work of the Lord, and pull me down. The servants of the devil have accused me of all manner of wickedness. But their evil doings will fall upon their own heads. When I began to preach I was as unspotted from the touch of any man as the infant in the cradle, and have remained so to this moment." She mentioned also that she had been accused of attempting to work a miracle by walking on the water, and also of having obtained presents and donations from her people by saying "the Lord hath need of this thing." But with great earnestness denied these assertions, and affirmed that they were the suggestion of the devil and the fabrications of her enemies. But these facts, together with many others, yet to be recorded, equally extraordinary, are too well authenticated to admit of a doubt, or to be passed over in silence, without doing injustice to the subject of this history.

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* Our auther has here been misinformed, as no Sisters of Jemima joined her Society.

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*Matthew v, 18.

In writing the history of Jemima Wilkinson thus far, those specific traits of her character which were more particularly developed in the formation and government of a distinct sect, have been occasionally touched, though not enlarged upon; some of her doctrines, and the manner and substance of her teaching, with the means whereby she acquired and maintained her ifluence over the minds of her followers, have also been in part described. In this respect, however, no more has been stated than was judged necessary and sufficient to connect the chain of facts and occurences which constitute the narrative of her life, and to disclose to the reader some of the principal causes which have produced the effects already detailed. There remains, therefore, many interesting anecdotes and extraordinary circumstances in relation to this singular personage, which, though they could not have been sooner brought into view, without seeming to interrupt the regular detail of facts, yet they afford a striking illustration of the character here drawn cf Jemima and her Society, and without which her history would be incomplete. They also serve to show the wild and unnatural conclusions to which fanaticism will lead her devoted victims, and the gross impositions which, under the garb of religion, may be successfully practised upon the minds of those who are ever ready to believe in any thing that is new and marvelous, although it may be totally at variance with the commonly received opinions of mankind, and inconsistent with reason and common sense.

During her ministrations in New England, Jemima found much difficulty in persuading the people to believe that she was a divine person. The circumstances of her confinement during the summer and autumn of 1776, and her pretended rising from the dead, were witnessed by many persons of undoubted veracity, and were publicly known and well understood in the neighborhood of her residence. But by shifting about from place to place, and pushing her schemes more boldly where she was less known, she at length, by dint of impudence and perseverence, succeed in obtaining a few proselytes, who, if they did not really believe, were interested in reporting, that she was the "Universal Friend of mankind and the Savior of sinners." After their removal to Pennsylvania, and subsequently on their settling in the Lake country, they found less difficulty in getting along with this item in the catalogue of their impositions. She and her sisters gave the following account of her sickness death, and the reanimation of her body. They stated that "the scarlet fever broke out among the troops on board the British fleet at New-Port, attended with symptoms of great malignity and contagion; it was communicated to the people on shore, and spread and ravaged the country to a considerable extent. The fever visited her father's family, all of whom were attacked in succession, and Jemima attended upon them through their illness. During this time she frequently said if she should be taken with this fever she was certain she should die. At length, when the others had all nearly recovered, the disease seized her with the most violent symptoms. After languishing *three* weeks in the greatest distress, she became perfectly helpless and speechless, and remained in that situation for *three* days, during which time her friends and attendants expected every moment would be her last. She then ceased to breathe or show any signs of life, when they all supposed she was dead. At the end of *three* hours, however, (as they pretend) she suddenly rose up in her bed, and to the utter astonishment of all present, (about sixty in number) said in a strong and audible tone of voice, "Glory to God and the Lamb!" and immediately asked her sisters to *lend* her some clothes. They supposed at first that she had been in a trance and was now delirious, but remembering that she had been *three* days helpless and speechless, and *three* hours apparently lifeless, they were lost in amazement, and knew not how to account for what they saw and heard, without ascribing it to some supernatural agency. According to her request they gave her clothes, and she dressed herself without any assistance, immediately rose and kneeled by the side of her bed and prayed for a considerable time, with great fervor and solemnity, and from that time went about in as good health as she had ever enjoyed."

This idle story, so outrageous to common sense, and so utterly destitute even of ordinary probability, was industriously circulated by herself and her followers, during their residence in Pennsylvania, and after their settlement in the state of New-York, accompanied and fortified by a multitude of marvellous and mysterious circumstances, calculated to induce a belief in the assertion that she had actually died, and that her body had been re-animated by an Almighty power—all of which was affirmed by her retinue with such uniformity, and seeming sincerity, that many intelligent and serious people were led astray; and had her conduct been as chaste and disinterested as her professions, the deception would probably have been practised to a much greater extent. Although in the latter part of her life she was more cautious in her public declarations as to her divinity, yet that in the early part of her career, and for many years after, she boldly and publicly maintained that she was the Messiah and Savior of mankind, is too well attested to admit of doubt.

In her prayers and in her preaching she would never speak of Jesus Christ in the third person, but prayed to the Father for blessings on her people and mankind, "for the sake of the Lamb which was slain." But in her conversations with those who appeared to entertain doubts as to the character and person, she was always evasive, and endeavored to shape her discourse in such a manner as to induce them, if possible, to believe she was something more than a mere human being, and at the same time not to shock their understandings by an open and positive declaration of what she wished them to believe. And by her ambiguous phrases, half concealed allusions, indirect suggestions, and significant looks and gestures, she clearly disclosed her intention of respresenting herself as an incarnation of our blessed Savior. By this course of management she induced many who denied their belief in her divinity, to think her a very extraordinary person. A gentleman who held these sentiments respecting Jemima, and who entertained serious thoughts of joining the Society, sought an opportunity and enquired of her in direct terms whether she did pretend to be the Messiah? To this question she gave him cautious and evasive answer, and concluded with repeating from John 16th chap. and 12th verse—"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." This hypocrasy by which she had probably deceived many, effectually opened his eyes, and he immediately abandoned her and dismissed all thoughts of becoming a follower.

In order to establish and perpetuate the belief of her divine mission among her people, and to spread the same idea among others, she adopted a settled course of practice in one particular, which was in no case departed from; this was, never to acknowledge her proper name. Having assumed the tittle of "Universal Friend of mankind," she had no further occasion for the name of Jemima Wilkinson; accordingly all her followers were taught as a duty to consider and call her the "Universal Friend," and on all occasions to abstain from speaking of her in such a manner as to indicate any distinction of sex. In speaking of Jemima, or any thing belonging or appertaining to her, they always said "the Friend—it is the Friend's;" thus it was, "the Friend's house"—"the Friend's carriage," &c. but would never say her or hers, though to avoid it they might be compelled to use the word "Friend" a hundred times in the same conversation. Such articles of her apparel and household furniture as usually bear the initials of the owner's name were marked "U. F." and the traveling carriage bore the same impress. It was derogatory to the character to which she pretended to acknowledge any relationship or connexion with the human family, none therefore, over whom she exercised any influence, dared to call her by her name, or allude to her family or kindred, and when visited by strangers she enjoyed the satisfaction of hearing herself addressed in the manner prescribed to her vassals, by those who chose rather to flatter than offend her. In the course of her life she was frequently visited by clergymen of different denominations who, not choosing to gratify her vanity in this respect, called her Jemima Wilkinson, and enquired of her whether that was her name? to which she generally answered "Thou sayest it,"* or "Thou hast said it." A gentleman of the name of Day, on receiving this answer, enquired further whether she did not belong to the family of Jeremiah Wilkinson, and whether he was not her father? she replied, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from Heaven."† She then enquired his name, (although she well knew it) and on receiving his answer, she replied "Day! Day! thy day will soon be turned into night unless thee mends thy ways."

Jemima was always thus cautious and evasive when in conversation with persons of talents and learning, who attempted either to draw from her any avowal of her creed, or to controvert any known point of her doctrines, sometimes avoiding a direct answer by changing the subject of conversation, or by repeating texts of scripture, and embraced every opportunity of repeating the words made use of by our Savior in answer to his disciples. Having attempted to personate Christ, it was to be expected she would adopt his language on all occasions where she could expect any benefit from it. She has frequently shown a strong desire to ascertain what the "people of the world" thought of her and what they said of her, and on several occasions enquired of individuals whether they believed she was from Heaven? A gentleman to whom she addressed this enquiry, told her he believed her spirit came from Heaven, and from the common parent of all mankind, but that her body was of human origin; upon which she recited several texts of scripture, and then added, "When I first assumed this dead body I found much resistence from men and devils"—and was proceeding in this strain with affected solemnity, when her auditor, not having any great respect for her religion or morals, and not wishing to treat her rudely, immediately took his leave of her. These arts were practised by her with great assiduity and with considerable success. The impression thus made on the minds of some of her devotees was such, that they have, in many instrances, been known to prostrate themselves on the floor on coming into her presence. On these occasions she would, in an affectionate manner, desire them to rise, saying

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*Luke XXIII, 3d.

†1st Corithians xv, 47th.

"See that thou do it not, but worship God." The people of her Society affected to use the scripture language as much as possible, not only in their epistolary correspondence, but in their conversation using *thee* and *thou* to each other; but in speaking of Jemima, or to her, they always called her "the Friend," the "Beloved," or the "Beloved Friend." In addressing her on the subject of their frailties and imperfections they were accustomed to express a "hope for pardon in the Beloved," and "through the Beloved." That she absolutely required them to worship her as their Savior, we have perhaps no positive evidence; but that she inculcated this as a duty, and by some means or other succeeded in inducing them to acknowledge her as such, and address her accordingly, is well known to many besides her followers; and the apparent sincerity with which they rendered this homage, and the self-complacency with which she received it, prove most clearly that it was required by the system of religion which they had adopted. Some of the members, it is true, deny that they believe she was the Messiah, but then they say she was an extraordinary person, unlike any other teacher or professor of religion. But wherein consists the extraordinary traits of character to which they allude, or wherein she differed from other women, they have not, as yet. condescended to inform us. There are others who believe, or pretended to believe, that she was their Savior, and that their eternal happiness or misery depended upon their obedience to her, and her favor and good will towards them. Some of these have been heard to say, even since the death of Jemima, that they were "so far satisfied with the *all-sufficiency* of the Friend, that they felt no necessity nor inclination for seeking any other being as a Savior, or from any other source to expect future happiness.

This fatal delusion has survived its hypocritical author, and will probably accompany its victims through life. If a doubt is expressed to them on the subject they reply "the Jews disbelieved in the Lord at his first coming, and it is not strange if the world now disbelieves in his second coming." And when the question has been put to them directly whether they believe she was the Savior of mankind? they answered "we cannot say that the Friend was not." At the commencement of her public career this belief was diligently promulgated, and obtained from time to time considerable currency.

The more cautious of her followers would not, it is true, admit in direct terms that they believed Jemima to be Jesus Christ, but still they afforded sufficient evidence, in their demeanor and conversations respecting her, that they entertained this opinion; while the more ardent and unreflecting had no hesitation, nay, were ostentatious, in avowing their belief in the divinity of her person. One of the latter description, who in the early part of Jemima's priesthood was suddenly proselyted to her views, and continued for a short time one of her most furious zealots, not only acknowledged this article of their faith, but publicly defended it with great firmness and energy. Being engaged in a dispute on this point at a small collection in his neighborhood, and waxing warm in the good cause, he rose from his seat, and pointing to Jemima said, "That person has converted my soul, and I want no other Savior,—the Universal Friend of mankind has wrought thirteen miracles, which I have seen with my own eyes, curing the lame, the halt and the blind, and raising up and making instantly whole, unfortunate persons who had been diseased more than a year, and who were supposed to have been beyond the hope of relief or mercy in this world. I am therefore satisfied of the divine character of that person, and shall look to none other as my Savior."

He continued steadfast n this belief for some time, and was in great repute with the members of the Society for his devotion and zeal, and received from Jemima many tokens of her approbation of his fidelity to her cause. But she at length miscarried in one of her attempts to work a miracle, and the circumstances coming to the knowledge of this misguided and mystery-loving convert, his faith was instantly put to flight, and he immediately after abandoned the Society. As he had been one of her most devoted followers, and always foremost in trumpeting her fame, particularly as it respected the number and magnitude of her miracles, she felt sensibly his loss; and although she would have gladly retained him in her service, yet such was the firmness and decision of his mind, and the promptitude with which he retracted his errors on discovering the true character of his mistress, and the nature of her *pretended* miracles, that she never dared to make any further attempts upon his credulity.

Her followers were accustomed to address her by those names and attributes which belong only to the great Savior of mankind, and an instance has been known of one of her disciples sending her a letter superscribed "To Jesus Christ." The conveyance of this letter was intrusted to one of the followers, who showed it to a friend of hers, whom she visited on the way, with a view no doubt of impressing her with a belief in the divinity of her mistress.

A short time after Jemima removed into the Lake country, she got into some difficulty by reason of these pretences. She maintained the sacredness of her person and the divinity of her character with such impudent boldness as to give public offence, in consequence of which a complaint was made to the Grand Jury of Ontario county, who presented an indictment against her for blasphemy. But she was never arraigned upon this indictment. Doubts were entertained by some as to the propriety of pursuing her with a criminal prosecution in a land where freedom of opinion and religious toleration are secured by the Constitution, and constitute the boast of every citizen; and others from delicacy to her sex, and compassion for a misguided fanatic, were unwilling to see any thing done which could be ascribed to a spirit of persecution. These sentiments coming in aid of the earnest solicitations of her friends, prevented a public trial. But the danger to which she had been thus exposed made a lasting impression upon the mind of Jemima, and rendered her ever after exceedingly circumspect on this subject, and her followers also became extremely cautious of promulgating or explaining the ideas they entertained concerning her.

Among the many schemes projected by Jemima, for the purpose of establishing and perpetuating her influence and authority over her people, was that of giving titles to her principal followers. Her title as has already been stated, was the "Universal Friend of mankind." One follower was called the "Prophet Elijah," and another the "Prophet Daniel." Sarah Richards was the "Prophet Daniel," and being a fine looking woman, she was sometimes dignified with the addition of "the *beloved*." She was subject to fits, commonly called falling sickness. It was pretended by her and Jemima that, during these intervals of partial suspension of the animal functions, her spirit left her body and winged its flight to the heavenly regions, where she had a clear and distinct view of the state of her fellow beings on earth, and of their future destiny; and was moreover able to inform every one, who wished to know, by what means they could secure for themselves eternal happiness; which in general was nothing more nor less than for those who belonged to the true fold, to yield implicit faith in the sanctity of Jemima, and unconditional obedience to her authority; and as to those who were not members, they must immediately join her Society, and become equally faithful and submissive.

As Sarah sometimes had these fits when a number were collected to hold their evening sittings, she and Jemima had ample opportunities of practising their legerdemain upon the followers, and others who, being neighbors, occasionally attended these meetings, although they were not professed members. While under the operation of these fits, Sarah would lie for some time motionless and apparently lifeless. The first indication of returning animation, was a tremulous motion of the extremities and the muscles of the face; Jemima would watch these symptons with the utmost anxiety, weeping violently, and repeating "dear soul, what pangs the Prophet Daniel endures, what agony the beloved suffers for the sins of the people." On recovering, Sarah always had a message for some one or more of their acquaintance, who by the by, had been previously designated by Jemima. If the persons for whom these ghostly communications were intended were present, they immediately received them, together with such censures or commendations as Jemima thought fit to bestow, prefaced however by this remark, "the Lord sendeth thee a message by the mouth of his servant the Prophet Daniel." But if the objects of these impositions happened not to be present, they were immediately complimented with an invitation to "come and see the Friend, for the Lord hath a message for thee by the mouth of his servant the Prophet Daniel." To the faithful and devout these messages were always of the most comfortable and flattering nature, full of gracious promises, interspersed occasionally with an intimation that a continued and strict complianc with all the requirements of Jemima was still necessary, and that to fall short in any, however small a degree, in their duty to the "Friend," would expose them to imminent danger of being cast off forever, and that as she always knew the workings of their minds, they could not, even in secret, neglect the instructions which she gave them, without endangering their safety. Others who were less devoted to the interests of the Society;

were encouraged with the hope of future happiness, provided they would double their diligence in propitiating the Friend's favor, and in rendering their assistance to provide for the wants of the Society. In this way their messages were framed to suit the views of these crafty women, and were always graduated by a regular scale, from the most flattering promises to the faithful, to the severest denunciations against those who were deemed incorigible, and particularly those who had offended the sisterhood. Against the latter in particular, she would sometimes inveigh with extreme bitterness, and inform them that the Prophet Daniel had been permitted to view, in long perspective, the wicked lives they were leading, their dreadful end and the fiery torments prepared for them in another world, and from which nothing could save them but an immediate compliance with the requisitions of herself and the rules of her Society. Sarah Richards was in this respect, as well as in many others, a most convenient and useful instrument, and rendered her very great assistance in obtaining proselytes and in governing and instructing the Society.

But the Prophet Elijah did not act quite so disinterested or successful a part. He was a man of strong mind and still stronger passions. Jemima promoted him to the dignity of the Prophet Elijah in order to give him that influence among the brethren and sisters which was necessary to enable him to subserve her interests. He afterwards conceived the idea of using the advantages he had thus acquired for his own amusement and gratification. He accordingly undertook the business of manufacturing dreams, visions and trances, whereby he became acquainted with the destinies of some of the members, particularly the inexperienced and *weak sisters*, for whom he frequently had very *loving* messages, which were always delivered *in private*. Jemima, however, soon became acquainted with the nature of his *ministrations*, and immediately degraded him from his dignity as a Prophet and thrust him out of the Society; and although possessed of much cunning and address, poor *Elijah* could never again reinstate himself as a member among them. In fact, many of the Society who had, until then, never suspected the sanctity of the good Prophet, were outraged in their feelings, and ever after looked upon him with abhorrence.

Having had some experience in devising and carrying on a new system of religion, he was altogether unwilling to abandon the trade, or give up his pretensions to saintship. He therefore turned his attention to the establishment of a new congregation or Society, on a plan somewhat resembling the New-light Baptists. These were to be called Free-will Baptists, to distinguish them from other sects, after whom they copied so closely as to become nearly identified with them in every thing but their name. But in this new undertaking he found many difficulties, and not having the assistance of his cunning old friend and coadjutor Jemima, and being in disgrace with the members of her Society he made but poor progress. At one time he had a few hearers who seemed inclined for a while to listen to his exhortations. He therefore exerted himself with considerable diligence to infuse into them that degree of enthusiasm and ardor of devotion which would be necessary to enable him to organize and maintain a distinct Society. The principal point insisted upon was, a superabundance of faith and zeal in the good cause in which they were about to engage. To effect this, no opportunity was omitted, nor art left untried, of which he was master, to bring them to the sticking point. He represented to them that if they had but "sufficient faith they could remove mountains," or do almost any thing else. He at length undertook to try an experiment upon the *faith* or rather *credulity* of an ignorant African, who was laboring with him in his field.

They concluded that their faith was sufficiently strong to enable them to run through the flame of a burning brush heap without receiving any injury, and mutually agreed to perform the miracle. The poor negro went first, and being a man of great activity, passed with the fleetness of the wind through the burning brush ; yet the fierceness of the blaze was such that he came off badly singed, which so cooled the ardor and staggered the *faith* of the *Prophet*, that he judged it more prudent to go *round* than *through* the fire. The unfortunate result of this farce put an end to the operations of the "Phophet Elijah," and relieved Jemima from the jealousy which she began to entertain of what she feared would at some future day, become a rival establishment.

Jemima was liberal in the bestowment of titles and dignities in proportion as she found them useful in the government of her flock. One of her sisters was nicknamed "John the beloved," and was occasionally permitted to act the part of a

Prophet, and another of the sisterhood was dubbed with the appellation of "Enoch the Prophet of old." But they were not sufficiently cunning and skilful to be of much service to Jemima in the character of Prophets. Sarah Richards was altogether the greatest adept in this business, and probably practised as much imposition upon the members of the Society as Jemima did during the time she was a member; in manufacturing visions and trances she certainly outstripped all others that attempted the business, and so well did she manage on these occasions that she was never foiled but once, and in that instance she would have succeeded but for the impertinent curiosity of a physician who had been invited to witness the operation. Jemima had entertained strong hopes of proselyting this young gentleman, but as he appeared to labor under some doubts and scruples it became necessary to get up one of Sarah's visions for his especial benefit. But not happening to have a fit at hand, she was under the necessity of feigning one, a shift to which they often resorted, as the real fits but seldom occurred, and the exigencies of the Cabinet required a frequent repetition of the farce. While she was performing this ridiculous cheat the cunning Doctor stepped to the bed side, and remarked that she was in a fainting fit; but Jemima denied that Sarah had fainted, asserted that she was in a trance, and very sternly desired him not to touch her. The Doctor by this time had taken her hand under pretence of feeling her pulse, and suddenly stripping up her sleeve, declared that unless she was immediately bled she would expire in two minutes; this so startled the "*Prophet Daniel*" that she gave a loud scream and jumped up, and together with those in the room, thrust the poor Doctor down stairs without ceremony.

This was a sad discomfiture, and gave great offence to Jemima and those who were present on this important occasion. They immediately denounced him as a heretic, reprobate and incorrigible sinner, without the hope and beyond the reach of mercy. Having the advantage of numbers they easily pursuaded their friends and the members of the Society that the account he gave of the miscarriage of the Prophet, was an invention of his own, and convinced them that Sarah had seen, in her trance, the poor Doctor, and many other such doubters of the faith and disturbers of the peace of the Society, bound with red hot chains, and rolling in burning brimstone, and advised all who regarded their future happiness to have nothing to do with so foul a sinner. They also cautioned their followers against crediting any thing he should say, as he had taken offence, they said, at the friendly advice they had given him, and the attempts they had made to reclaim him from his wicked ways, and to save him from the dreadful punishment which Sarah had very distinctly seen awaiting him. The members of the Society, therefore, believed this statement and adopted Jemima's resentment against the Doctor for slandering the "Prophet Daniel."

Jemima always evinced a fixed determination to exact from her followers unconditional submission to her authority. She possessed a lofty mind, a proud spirit, an impatient and high temper, and could not brook opposition from any person on any occasion whatever. She affected to consider herself superior to any human being, and in her conversations and instructions inculcated a preference to the wife over the husband, and in many instances, even in the latter part of her life, produced much unhappiness in the families of some of her friends, by urging to the women that it was contrary to their duty, as professors of religion, to acknowledge, either in words or actions, the right of the husband to rule his household. She also made attempts upon children and young inexperienced persons to induce them to abandon their homes and join the Society. In support of this she quoted Hebrews twelfth chapter and ninth verse, "Furthermore we have had fathers of the flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of Spirits, and live?" Her commentary on this passage of Scripture was, that although they might have submitted to the authority of their fathers, and reverenced them, yet, that in order to secure eternal life they should renounce all allegiance to their parents and join the Society, which was the true fold of the faithful, and under the protection and immediate governance of the Lord. By these means she succeeded, in the early part her career, in seducing a number of young persons to leave their families and join her. But after prohibiting matrimony, these attempts upon the youth of her neighborhood were attended with very little success; few, if any, could be found who, for the sake of the uncertain benefits to be derived from joining themselves to a strange sect, whose system of religious worship and instruction was suspected, and whose morality, to say the least of it, was equivocal, were willing to renounce the principles in which they had been educated, and abandon all hopes of that happiness which arises from a compliance with the obvious dictates of our nature and the first wish of the heart of man.

As Jemima always had some text to suit every occasion, so she could prove by scripture authority that women ought not to yield obedience to their husbands. "We ought to obey God rather than man"—Acts 5th, 29th. This text she quoted on such occasions, and expounded it as follows:—"We," meaning women exclusively, "ought not by intermarrying with the men, to give them pretext, according to the fashion and custom of a wicked world, for exacting obedience from us, who they acknowledge to be the better part of creation; and that such women as have unfortunately been married before they became acquainted with the true interpretation of Scripture, and *our* doctrines on this subject, are in duty bound to renounce all allegiance to their husbands, and if possible to obtain the supremacy in relation to the domestic police and government of the family." But in all cases where the husband belonged to, or would join the Society, the question of superiority was always settled between them by Jemima in person, and her requisitions were, in these, as in almost all other cases, scrupulously complied with.

It is not intended, neither is it necessary, to enter into an elaborate discussion of the respective rights and duties of the parties to the marriage contract. These are relative and easily understood by those to whom they appertain, and it is very probable that more happiness is enjoyed in those families where these points are never agitated, than where they are made the subjects of domestic controversy. A well bred liberal minded man will be satisfied with the care and attention bestowed by his wife in that department which nature and the custom of the country have assigned her, without wishing to control her in the exercise of her judgment in discharging the duties she owes to herself and and her family; and a prudent wife, who regards the honor and interests of her husband and the happiness of her children, will voluntarily do more towards promoting these objects than she could be induced to perform by the exercise of any compulsory right or authority which the husband may pretend to possess for enforcing her obedience. But in the opinion of Jemima, it was not sufficient that the sexes should be considered equal. She had been long accustomed to exercise her authority over her followers both male and female without opposition, and in some instances with extreme severity. This gave her an exalted opinion of the superiority of her own sex, and of their peculiar fitness to govern, and it is not improbable but in process of time, she reasoned herself into the belief that in some unlucky moment the order of nature had been reversed, that the empire of man was a mere assumption of power, obtained by force and fraud, and that under her happy auspices the fair sex were to be restored to those rights and dignities of which they had been thus despoiled. To effect this important revolution in practice and sentiment, among the members of her Society at least, Jemima took unwearied pains, in which she was more successful than would be readily believed by any person unacquainted with the materials upon which she thus operated, and the means by which she usually carried her points. That she completely succeeded in this scheme with respect to a large proportion of her followers, is obvious to any one who has had even a moderate acquaintance with the Society. Those male members who by long submission have become accustomed and reconciled to this petticoat discipline, discover its effects in their looks and actions so plainly, that they are apparent even to a stranger. But they have an excuse for this as well as for almost every other departure from the common customs of the world, and the meanness, the quiescent and subdued spirit of these people, are palmed upon the public for meekness and humility, and the effects of the benign influence of Jemima's system of religion.

In order to establish her power more firmly, and at the same time gratify her occasioal resentments, Jemima frequently exercised her authority in punishing those who had been guilty of violating any of her commands. In some instances her decisions were extremely ludicrous, and the punishments which she inflicted were often of the most ludicrous character. Although she always maintained a most serious and sanctimonious exterior in presence of her followers generally, yet there were moments when in private with Sarah Richards, and one or two others who enjoyed her confidence, in which she relaxed from her wonted severity, and indulged in frivolity and merriment. Their private room being on the second floor, they thought themselve secure from prying eyes and listening ears, and getting into a pretty high frolic one evening, their mirth attracted the curiosity of one of the members, who very slily climbed up into the top of a cherry tree, which stood immediately in front of their window, from whence he had a fair view of an exhibition which, to him, was altogether new and very amusing. But in retreating from his post of observation he was unluckily intercepted by one of the domestics, by whom information was conveyed to Jemima. The next day this inquisitive sinner was arraigned before the Cabinet Council, and threatened with the most awful punishment for the dreadful crime of which he had been guilty. The poor deluded wretch trembled in every joint, and probably imagined that his last hour had arrived. He therefore confessd his guilt and the motives which had led to the perpetration of the offence, and very devoutly and fervently begged for mercy. After torturing him with the fear of perdition for some time, Jemima, in token of her great forbearace and loving kindness to all dutiful and penitent members of her community, and in consideration of his extreme distress and deep humility for all his sins, and this his most heinous one in particulr, condescended to let him off with a small portion of that punishment with which he had been at first threatened; which was no other than to wear a *sheep bell* suspended from his neck by a small rope, for three weeks, in public and private, and to appear thus accoutred at all their public meetings and evening sittings during that time. He no doubt thought himself extremely fortunate in escaping so easily, and ascribed his exemption from a more terrible punishment to the benignity of his beloved mistress. He therefore cheerfully assumed this degrading badge of submission and slavery, and patiently acquiessed in his sentence as to the time and manner of wearing the bell; nay, he became a little ostentatious in his compliance with these orders, as evincing greater devotion to the Friend, and of cours· more religion than was common to the other members, while Jemima and her coadjutors secretly laughed at his ignoance, his stupidity and his folly.

Another having given Jemima offence by some unseemly trick, not necessary here to be mentioned, was sentenced to wear on his head a *black cap* for two or three weeks. This sentence was carried into execution with the same punctuality as the former, and the poor man who suffered this penalty to propiciate offended majesty, no doubt considered himself lucky in escaping a still greater punishment.

It was no uncommon thing for Jemima and Sarah to indulge themselves in mirth and laughter at the oddities of their followers; and the ignorance, credulity and stupidity of these deluded people were frequently the subject of sport and sarcastic remark between them. It is not essential to, nor perhaps consistent with, the character of the true christian to be continually wrapped in mystery and gloom, or to seclude himself altogether from a social and cheerful intercourse with his fellow man; but it is scarcely to be tolerated in any one, and particularly in a professor of religion to ridicule and sneer at those acts of devotion which others, in the sincerity of their hearts, think it their duty to perform, much less can a justification be imagined for the founder and governness of an infatuated Society, in ridiculing that deportment which she required of its members, and that credulity and delusion which she had brought upon them. When she arrived at Newtown, on her way to the "promised land," a number of persons came to the beach and met them at their landing. On their approach, Jemima seeing that several of them, particularly some boys and young Indians on the bank of the river, were not very genteelly apparelled, jocosly remarked, to Sarah Richards, "see how the *fig-leaves* rattle;" a person standing near enquired her meaning, when finding she had been overheard, very gravely explained herself by saying, "Now the Lord hath come among them, they are all prepared with an *excuse* for the misdeeds they have done, and these *excuses* are the *fig-leaves* to which the Friend alludes." Whether this was the true explanation of her meaning, or the result of her ready wit in devising the means of concealing her levity, is perhaps immaterial, as in either case we have the strongest evidence of her hypocrisy and falsehood; for if she intended to ridicule their tattered garments, which was undoubtedly the fact, her explanation was not true; and if that was not her intention, she was guilty of falsehood and imposture in pretending to be their Lord.

Although Jemima gave an obvious preference to the females over the males in all matters and things relating to the government and wellfare of the Society, yet in her intercourse with strangers and people not belonging to her community, it was apparent that she always preferred the company of men to those of her own sex. She showed also a particular partiality for gentlemen of education and literature, and appeared desirous of obtaining useful information from them whenever she had an opportunity. And in return, she would endeavor to requite them for her improvement on literary and scientific subjects, by imparting to them some disinterested advice in relation to their present and future state, in which she would sometimes venture to recommend her creed as the only safe and sure system of religion. This taste for literary company and thirst for knowledge increased with her years, and in the latter part of her life became exceedingly strong and she suffered no opportunity to pass unimproved of adding to her stock of *legal* acquirements. But this is easily accounted for by the circumstance of her having had much trouble and many suits in relation to her property, and it is not surprising that she should feel a strong inclination to cultivate an acquaintance with those principles and legal maxims which constitute our only security in the enjoyment of private property. Jemima preached against the vanity of riches, and the sinfulness of the pride and pompt of the world, and inculcated meekness and humility, while, at the same time, she was not only avaricious, but haughty and vainglorious; and despised the poor whether they were her followers or not. Her attempts to gain prosolytes were always among those who had property and the means of assisting towards her own support; but the indigent she considered as a burthen, and kept them from her presence. Although they might be fed in her kitchen when they came to her house, yet she would not suffer them to approach her. On being informed that she had been charged with this partiality among her followers, she replied, "I do not choose to have my house overrun with such creatures; they are no company for any body. There are persons whose company is agreeable to me, and them I will entertain; but the low set I will not be troubled with."

There was a woman belonging to the society whose family was poor, and who lived very unhappily with her husband. He had no faith in the divinity or morality of Jemima, and was not well satisfied with his wife's connexion with the society. He sometimes ridiculed her credulity, and she defended her creed and faith with the greater obstinacy. She was disposed to part with him and join herself to the household of the Friend, but this Jemima would not permit; but enjoined it upon the woman to stay with her husband "to torment him for his obstinacy in abusing and speaking ill of the Friend." In a conversation with an acquaintance, about a year before her death, Jemima gave the above reason for prohibiting this unfortunate follower from coming to live with her, and added, that should they separate, it would only produce trouble to herself, as the woman was poor and had nothing to bring with her, and of such she had too many already. She also expressed herself in terms of strong resentment against the husband, and repeated, "I will *compel* her to stay with him, to revenge myself on him for his obstinacy and profligacy:" and evinced a most malignant temper towards him, and a total apathy towards his unfortunate wife, whom, by her incantations, she had rendered miserable.

While Jemima resided in Pennsylvania, a Mrs. L. joined her society, and as her husband was a wealthy man, great pains were taken to induce him also to become a member. Being deceived by the many stories which were circulated of the mysteries and miracles of the Friend, he became a steady attendant at her meetings, and for a while Jemima thought herself sure of him. But making rather too bold, an attempt upon his purse, she gave him the alarm. Her avarice appeared to him altogether inconsistent with the character to which she pretended, and his doubts and his fears on this subject, led him to a rational enquiry into her pretensions and conduct; which brought him to the conclusion that the less he had to do with her the better, and he accordingly withdrew altogether. But his wife had become so perfectly infatuated that she could not be prevailed on to leave Jemima without her consent, and this, as might naturally have been expected, was not given, so long as there remained the most distant prospect of obtaining him. But after giving up all hopes of succeeding with him, and finding the woman brought nothing into the Society but trouble and expense, Jemima dismissed her and sent her back to her husband and family, after an absence of near seven years.

There are many other instances in which the conduct of Jemima in relation to the government of the Society and the procurement of new members, clearly proves that she cared but little for the poor, and that her chief attention was paid to the wealthy, from whom she derived the means of supporting herself and her housshold; and that her care of the souls of men were graduated according to the property which they possessed and the proportion which she expected to appropriate to her own use.

Jemima was extremely superstitious, and as her followers generally adopted her sentiments and followed her advice in all matters of faith and mystery, they, for the most part, became equally so. Every extraordinary occurrence which happened at home or abroad, whether it concerned them or not, was foreseen by her in a vision or a dream, and after the public had become fully informed on the subject thro' the ordinary channels of information, she could inform her people of the *dream* she had, or the *vision* she had seen at the very moment the affair happened. She was excessively fond of relating her dreams, some of which were very extraordinary, if they were really the dreams of sleep, or not, as we have great reason to suspect, the vagrant reveries of her wakeful moments. Of these she had a great variety, which, if collected and properly arranged, would make a volume about equal to "Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales." From the following specimen the reader may form a pretty correct idea of the whole catalogue.

"I dreamed," she said, "that I saw the whole universe called to judgment by the sound of the last trumpet—I was among the last who obeyed the summons, and the most undistinguished among the innumerable assembly. Suddenly I beheld a cross in the heavens hovering directly over my head, and at the same time I heard a voice from some hidden place proclaim 'the last shall be first and the first last: come forth ye chosen of the Lord;' and at that moment I awoke to the sad realities of this life."

A young gentleman residing in her neighborhood having noticed her fondness for dreams, and dreaming, and feeling inclined to flatter her vanity, visited her on a certain occasion, and very gravely informed her that he had recently experienced a very singular and extraordinary dream, and was in great difficulty as to its true interpretation. She was highly delighted with this reference to her wisdom from a person "of the world," and of whom, until then, she had never entertained any hopes. She therefore very graciously desired him to give her a circumstantial relation of his dream, and she had no doubt but the true interpretation would be revealed to her. He accordingly proceeded to state that in his dream he "had seen a mighty tempest accompanied with thunder and lightning, and hail and rain, which continued for many days. That the floods came and swept the plains and vallies with destruction, and at length covered the whole country. And he saw the affrighted inhabitants fleeing in the greatest consternation and confusion, to the tops of the highest hills and mountains, whither they were pursued by the desolating flood. In the meantime he saw 'The Universal Friend of Mankind' in a great vessel resembling in its form and appearance the pictures which he had seen of Noah's ark, with all her followers on board, and floating safely on the the top of the angry tide. And he saw great multitudes who were driven about among the foaming billows, and near drowning, approached the ark and beg for admittance, and call upon the name of 'The Universal Friend of Mankind' to come and save them. But they were told that they had rejected her offers and neglected her counsel all their lives; that the day of her grace was past, and they must take the consequences of their obstinacy and unbelief. Thus they were rejected and all were swallowed up and destroyed, except Jemima and her followers."

She then assured him that his dream

was too plain in its meaning to require an interpretation, and that at some future period, which she did not then choose to name, it would be literally fulfilled; and that, as it proved her system to be the only true one, and the ark of safety, it ought to admonish him and all others of the dangers of delaying until the threatened calamity should come upon them.

The relation of this *pretended* dream gave Jemima much satisfaction; and on many occasions she gravely rehearsed it as a revelation of the judgment which awaited those who continued obstinate in rejecting the faith.

Dreaming, and seeing apparitions, and hearing extraordinary noises and ominous sounds, were very common to the Society, in which all the members were allowed to participate; and whoever had the most ingenuity in fabricating or embellishing a tale of wonder, was sure to dish up the greatest treat.—But the manufacturing of visions and foretelling future events (after they had happened) being a business of too delicate and intricate a nature to be entrusted to unskilful hands, was altogether monopolized by Jemima. She did not, it is true, enjoy the exclusive right by virtue of letters patent from the government, though she might perhaps have been well entitled to it as the original inventor, yet as her inhibition had, as to her followers, the sanction of law, her privileges in this respect were rarely or never encroached upon. Sarah Richards was, however, by *special favor*, and perhaps for *special purposes*, permitted to take a share in this employment. There was moreover, some necessity for this indulgence to Sarah. She was an active-minded enterprising person, as proud and as high spirited as Jemima, and had become so well acquainted with her secret history, as to place the latter completely in her power; her acknowledgment of Jemima's supremacy was no more than was requisite to enable her to maintain, by delusion, their authority over the members of the Society; her obedience was merely nominal and rendered only in return for such condescensions as she chose to insist upon from Jemima. She was also at least as well, if not better, qualified to act this part than Jemima; as her *fits* were denominated *trances*, and as there could be but little difference between the two in the minds of those who knew nothing about either, she could impose a belief in the one, when from the presence of the other, she was incapable of any thing else. During the time she resided with Jemima they were mutually dependent upon each other, for, although it would have been in the power of either, at any time, to expose the true character of the other, yet as the consequences would have been fatal to the prospects and prosperity of both, neither chose to try the experiment. They therefore made out so to manage their own private affairs, as that if any difficulties ever happened, they were kept secret from their followers, and the utmost harmony appeared always to have existed between them.

The power and spirit of prophecy were possessed by Jemima, and exercised by her on many occasions, and she ostentatiously boasted of having predicted the Revolution in France, the beheading of Louis, the destruction of the Royal family, the downfall of the French monarchy, and many of the most important events which have since happened in Europe. The invasion of Russia by Bonaparte in 1812, his discomfiture, his subsequent battles and defeats, his deposition and retirement to the Isle of Elba, his return to Paris, the battle of Waterloo, and his final dethronement and imprisonment at St. Helena, all took place, as she pretended, in exact fulfilment of her prophecies.

She also prognosticated an insurrection

among the blacks in one of the Southern states, the late war between this country and England, the capture of the city of Washington, and the defeat of the British troops at New Orleans, together with many other importent events which occurred during the war. But in all these cases, it happened, most unfortunately for her veracity, that nobody knew any thingof her *prophecies* until after the events, to which they related, had transpired and become matter of public notoriety.

In one instance, however, she ventured to disclose a prediction *before its fulfilment:* This, also, was in relation to Napoleon Bonaparte. She was a great admirer of this enterprising and victorious chieftain, and her partiality for him probably constituted the inspiration which dictated her prophecy. She said "he was an instrument in the hands of the Almighty for the purpose of bringing all the nations of the earth under one government, preparatory to the second coming of the Lord; that he would return to France, become again a mighty conquerer and subject the whole world to his sway." Jemima set a great value on this prophecy, and appeared to rely with the utmost confidence upon the exact fulfilment of it. She communicated it to a number of persons whose confidence and good opinion she wished to gain, to the end, that the final accomplishment of this prediction should convince them that her claims to divinity were well founded.

Having assumed the character of a Savior of the world, Jemima soon found it expedient to lay claim to the possession of those powers which distinguished the Messiah, and which by affording occular demonstration of his authority, were more peculiarly calculated to convince the beholder of the divinity of his person and the truth of his mission. She therefore, in a very early stage of her career, pretended to possess, not only the spirit of prophecy, but the power of working miracles. This was the most impolitic of all her pretensions, as it afforded a criterion by which it could easily be determined whether she possessed any qualifications not common to her sex. Being fully sensible of the danger of detection, she carefully forebore attempting any extraordinary performance, contenting herself with simply asserting her powers, without deigning to condescend to the exercise of them, and it was not until her veracity came to be doubted, and her character began to suffer, even among her followers, that she yielded to the necessity of attempting to work a miracle. Those who had no faith in her preaching, and looked upon her as an impostor, stated to her that Jesus Christ walked on the water, and if she was charged with a divine mission from Heaven, it was expected she could do the same; and some of her followers also felt a strong desire to see her give some evidence of the truth of her assertions concerning herself, by which they might not only become more perfectly satisfied themselves, but with which they could effectually answer the reasons and arguments made use of by their enemies. Jemima finding herself thus beset on all hands, was at length compelled to undertake the hazardous experiment of attempting to walk on the water. Trusting therefore to accident and the resources of her cunning mind for escaping exposure, she appointed a time at which she would meet her friends on the margin of Taunton river, in the town of Swanzey, and convince them of the reality of what she had taught them to believe, by walking on the water. She made her appearance at the time and place appointed, where she was met by a large collection of people, eager to witness the exhibition which had been promised them. She then commenced with an eloquent and fervent prayer, with which she occupied their attention a considerable time, after which she proceeded to the delivery of a discourse, in which she lectured her audience with considerable ability and with great severity, particularly on account of their want of faith. She told them that if they had faith to believe that she could perform the work of the Lord, they might rest satisfied, for it should be well with them, and as to those who did not believe, they are "an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet."* "Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Verily I say unto you, there shall no sign be given to this generation."† "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas."‡ She continued her discourse at considerable length, admonishing her friends to beware of the doubts and difficulties thrown in their way by a wicked world, which was meant by an "evil generation." She also reproved those who came there to gratify an idle curiosity, instead of listening to the voice of truth, and was particularly severe and bitter against those who had required this evidence of the truth of her words. She then addressed the whole in kind and affectionate langage, proclaimed that she was the "Universal Friend of Mankind," and that those who believed in the truth of her doctrines, obeyed her precepts and followed her advice, would be sure of a final pasport to Heaven, while those who denied her authority and rejected her counsels, would be cut off without the hope of pardon or mercy. After hearing her through and receiving her blessing, the assembly seperated and peaceably retired to their homes, some filled with awe and fear of her power and authority, some with commisseration at her delusion, and others with contempt for her hypoccricy.

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*Luke xi; 29. †Mark viii; 12. ‡Matthew xvi; 4.

This occurrence became the subject of mirth and ridicule to those who did not belong to the Society, and afforded them the means of annoying her followers, by putting them in mind of the cheat which Jemima had practiced upon their credulity. But this defeat made no visible impression on their minds, nor did it at all shake the confidence they pretended to repose in her perfectibility. The subject was duly canvassed among themselves in their own way, and although she had not seen fit to walk on the water on that occasion, they thought she had given a very satisfactory reason for the omission; and that whenever it should suit her convenience she would no doubt perform such a miracle as would satisfy them all. As a story never loses any thing by traveling or repetition, so the relation of this adventure increased in importance as it was handed from one to another, until on reaching her distant followers, it was magnified into a miracle of the first water, and many who were always ready to believe any tale, however preposterous, provided it went to establish the character of Jemima as a Prophetess, undoubtedly believed the fact as firmly as they believed in their own existence. Jemima therefore derived from this abortive attempt, all the benefit, as it respected the faith of her followers, which she could have received from the most complete success; and besides, it taught her the expediency of choosing her own mode of working miracles, in order to insure the greater facility in palming these impostures upon her deluded followers.

Jemima was for some time in doubt as to the effect her late attempt at working a miracle would produce upon the public mind. With respect to her followers she had but little difficulty in reconciling them to whatever she chose to require, particularly in matters of faith and mystery. In this instance she saw that no sensible diminution of confidence had been produced among them, and as to the opinion of the world, she pretended that it gave her no concern, otherwise than as their stubbornness and unbelief subjected them to the danger of being cut off from all hopes of future happiness.

The next scheme projected by Jemima for proving her infallibility, and convincing doubters of the truth of her mission, was to heal the sick. As an attempt of this sort would not be so public in its nature, nor so likely to expose her to immediate detection, she naturally calculated upon a greater probability of success, in case she could find a fit opportunity. Nor was it long before an occasion presented itself every way to her liking. A miss *Sarah Stone* had been violently ill and was just beginning to recover, when Jemima called to heal her malady. A considerable number of her followers assembled to witness the ceremony. Jemima having prayed with them, took the patient out of her bed, and placed her in an easy chair, and then delivered an exhortation, in which she asserted her power to heal the sick, and recommended to the girl patience, resignation and faith, particularly the latter, pretending that the good effects of what had been done, depended altogether on her *faith* in the power which she possessed of working miracles,—and promised her a certain and speedy recovery in case she exercised a sufficient degree of *faith*. She then departed, and the young woman regularly and slowly regained her health and strength, probably in the same manner as she would have done had Jemima let her alone. But she had been sick, the Friend had visited her, and promised her a certain restoration to health, and she was now completely restored. All therefore, who chose to believe in the miraculous effects of Jemima's impertinent interference, were at full liberty to enjoy their opinions, and to assert the infallibility of their mistress, whenever, and as often as suited their convenience. But those who did not belong to the society considered it a mere trick which the most stupid must easily understand ; they thought little of it, and the circumstance was soon forgotten, and probably would never have been recollected had it not grown into a miracle on traveling a little way from home. This trifling occurrence was of great service to

Jemima. The tale was told to her distant followers with variations and exaggerations, was handed from one to another, rehearsed in the public meetings and evening sittings of the faithful, with a train of circumstances which never existed, until it assumed the form and substance of a full grown miracle. Thus the members were prompted to greater zeal in her service, and thereby some little additions were made to their different Societies.

The success of this *miracle* added greatly to the satisfaction and pride of Jemima, and rendered her people more devoted to her service, more easily governed, and withal, a little more liberal in their donations for her support, which latter was a point of the first importance to her, and to which she always attended with the utmost care and solicitude.

She now projected another visit to Pennsylvania, and called upon the members to provide the means of prosecuting her journey with ease and comfort. They readily furnished her with the necessary supplies, and Jemima, attended as usual, proceeded on her way rejoicing at the complete success of this paltry contrivance, by which she had gained so many advantages. This was her second journey to Pennsylvania, and at this time she formed a regular Society at Worcester, and, as will readily be seen, she was much assisted by the rehearsal of all the circumstances of her great achievement in healing the sick, was now multiplied into a dozen, at least, of as wonderful miracles as ever were wrought since the foundation of the world. Here the effect produced by the promulgation of these idle stories, was much greater than it had been in Rhode-Island, not that the people were greater fools, for that was impossible, but because there was a sufficient number to affirm to the truth of them, and no one to contradict, or even explain the circumstances. Those who had become followers rejoiced at this new evidence of the divinity of their Idol, the wavering were confirmed, and many were added to their numbers, so that this Society, though recently formed, was nearly as numerous, and at least as wealthy and zealous as that in Rhode-Island. Jemima did not at this time attempt any marvelous exploits at Worcester, but her attendants were very anxious to sieze upon some circumstance, out of which they could manufacture a miracle by the time they should visit their New England friends. Whenever any were sick in her Society, it was their custom to send for Jemima, who never failed to visit them on these occasions. In two or three instances during her stay she was called to visit persons who were, or pretended to be, indisposed, and who were apparently in perfeect health the day following. In these cases the sudden recovery of the patients was ascribed altogether to the exercise of the power of Jemima to heal the sick, so that on their return to Rhode-Island her attendants had ten or a dozen very respectable miracles to give an account of, and which were, as usual, listened to with open mouthed wonder, by her adoring followers. Although Jemima saw distinctly the good effects produced by these deceptions, and felt much elated with her success, yet she was cautious of attempting them too often, lest she should miscarry in some of her schemes, and thereby lose the advantages which she had thus gained. She therefore made a shift to get along with the concerns without attempting any new or marvelous performances.

But at length it became necessary to resort to her old practices in order to keep up appearances, and to sustain the drooping confidence of her followers. The stories of healing the sick, becoming stale and uninteresting, by being repeated a thousand times, they began to wish for some new evidence of the power of Jemima. Those who really believed in these miracles, entertained no doubt but that she could repeat them whenever she pleased, and those who suspected the deception were equally well satisfied that she was sufficiently skilful to exhibit another specimen of this ledgerdemain without exposing herself to detection. The whole Society, therefore, now became anxious to witness a further display of her power, and a more striking illustration of her character. Jemima was perfectly aware of this disposition on the part of her people, and had been for some time preparing the means of gratifying it. But as the trick of healing the sick had already produced all the effects that could be expected from it, she had determined on a new and more imposing miracle, and had accordingly taken measures for *raising the dead.*

There was at this time an interesting young woman residing with Jemima, who had been for a considerable time a faithful and favored follower, and who was the subject upon which this miracle was to be performed. It was arranged by Jemima that this person should feign herself sick, and, while she remained secluded from company, it should be publicly stated, from time to time, that her malady was increasing, until finally it should be announced, that her spirit had left its tabernacle of clay, and ascended to the mansions of bliss. The usual preparations for her interment were then to be made, she was to be put in a coffin so constructed as to admit a sufficient quantity of air to support life—Jemima was to preach a funeral sermon, and lastly, when the procession was proceeding to the burial ground, Jemima was to walk by the side of the coffin, constantly and vehemently engaged in prayer, and at a suitable time she was to pray to the "Father in Heaven, to restore their dear deceased friend to life, for the sake of the Lamb that was slain." Whereupon the girl in the coffin should give a signal by imitating the groans and struggles of a person recovering from a fit; the coffin was then to be set down and opened, and she being found alive, was to finish the farce, and constitute the miracle of raising a dead person to life. Horrible and hazardous as this blasphemous project may appear, yet this bold and profligate woman had the hardihood to commence her operations, and actually attempt carrying it into effect. The young woman pretended to be unwell, and then so ill as to be confined to her bed. Jemima, under the pretence of her being a "dear and favorite follower," took upon herself the care of her patient; she would not allow any physician to be called in, neither was any person, excepting those who from necessity were intrusted with the secret, permitted to see her or even to come into her room. Her nearest friends were members of the flock, and durst not disobey Jemima, they could not therefore interfere. Some two or three who had been her companions, being alarmed on account of the dangerous situation in which she was represented to be, called at the house, and begged admittance, but were uniformly and pertinaciously refused. Jemima and her creatures informed them, that the young Friend was in the hands of the Lord, who would deal with her for the best, and that they need give themselves no trouble on the subject; that if her hour was come she must depart, and if not, they would in due time see her restored to health. As Jemima had been a long time meditating this project, and preparing the means for carrying it into execution, her arrangements and the discipline of her confidants were such that she found no difficulty whatever in continuing the deception until the seventh day of the pretended sickness of her patient, which was intended to be the last; during all which time she had succeeded in every respect to her entire satisfaction. The followers of Jemima believed that she could heal the sick, and hoped that, as she had not for a long time exercised this prerogative, she would consider the present as a favorable opportunity for making another manifestation of her power and glory, and therefore entertained strong hopes that this favorite of the Friend would suddenly be restored to health. This idea was countenanced by various hints and half expressed sentences from one to another, until it became general among the members throughout the neighborhood. Among the inmates of Jemima to whom the true secret of this farce was necessarily confined, was a companion of the *sick* sister, who was much attached to her. She had from the commencement of this scheme felt a strong repugnance to it, and had at first yielded her assent in obedience to the authority of her mistress; but she now became alarmed with the horrid nature of the imposture in which she was acting a part, and knew that in case they should succeed according to their calculation, the secret could not be kept but by a continued perseverance in falsehood during her whole life. She had therefore determined on breaking up the *show*, if possible, and if not, to retire from any further participation in its guilt.

Jemima was called from home about three miles to visit one of her followers who had been recently taken ill, and being in great distress, had sent a very urgent request to the "Universal Friend" to come without delay. The two young women being left alone a part of the time during Jemima's absence, had an ample opportunity of canvassing the merits of the business in which they were engaged. The one who was to have acted a subordinate part, represented to her companion in very strong language, the impropriety of their conduct, and that for herself, she was determined to proceed no further in it. She also advised her friend to desist immediately, and urged as a reason, the great danger she was in—that it was a most infamous imposture, and a horrible profanation—that it would be in no wise extraordinary if her Maker should be offended at such blasphemies, and strike her dead the moment her decease was announced abroad, and thus make a reality of that which they had intended only as an experiment upon the credulity of an innocent people. She urged also as another strong reason why there was more danger in this mock tragedy than they had at first imagined, that if the cheat should be suspected, and charged upon them, she would be sacrificed for the protection of the Friend's reputation, as she would sooner bury any one of her followers alive, than be detected in such an imposture, and that in this instance she could do it with impunity in case there should be danger of exposure. These arguments alarmed the patient exceedingly, and if they did not improve her health, they certainly cured her of all inclination to be put into a coffin.

After remaining a short time at the bed side of her follower, Jemima returned home full of anxiety for the success of her project, and determined that nothing should again divert her attention, for a moment, from a personal superintendance of the whole operation. But on her arrival she found the measures, which she had concerted with so much skill and care, for working one of the most wonderful miracles that ever was heard of, entirely deranged. She made an attempt, however, to mend matters, by endeavoring to reconcile her patient to continue the farce. But all to no purpose. She had become so thoroughly frightened with the idea of being laid out in the dress of a corpse, and put into a coffin, that the alternate threats and promises which were liberally dealt out, produced no effect. Jemima was therefore obliged, though very reluctantly, to relinquish the hope of immortalizing her name by restoring to life a dead body.

Although she was under the absolute necessity of abandoning all hopes of success in the original project, yet she not only succeeded admirably in extricating herself from the dilemma in which she was placed by her patient's refusal to die, but actually turned the affair to a considerable account. It had been announced during that afternoon, that the young lady was evidently very near her end, that she was helpless and speechless, and that there was in reality no probability that she could live through the night. Several of the followers were collected at the Friend's house to enquire after the health of the young woman, and on being told that her case was considered hopeless, were exceedingly sorrowful, and lamented the untimely fate of their dear sister, and likened her to a fragrant flower cut down and withering e'er the sun of life had kiss'd from its bloom the morning dew of its existence. While they were thus mourning over the approaching fate of their companion, and gravely moralizing on the uncertainty of human life, and the fleeting vanity of all things beneath the sun, Jemima was very differently and more earnestly occupied. She was closeted with her patient, endeavoring, after she found there was no probability whatever of succeeding in the original project of raising the dead, to extort from the girl a promise of secrecy, and to induce her to consent to be suddenly raised from a bed of sickness to perfect health. She had become so much alarmed with her situation, that she hardly knew what to do with herself, she abhorred the fraudulent enterprise in which she had been unwarily led to engage, and was, determined to abandon Jemima the first convenient opportunity. But as yet she was in her power, and durst not offend her for fear she might yet be sacrificed. She was also extremely anxious to be discharged from her confinement, which could not be done without Jemima's consent. She therefore at length yielded a reluctant consent to be healed of her malady, and to keep secret the fact which Jemima was so anxious to conceal. Having thus happily succeeded in securing her retreat, Jemima immediately made preparation for healing her sick patient, which was, with all due form and solemnity, announced to the company present. The door of the pretended sick room being then thrown open, discovered a small table, on which were placed three candles, Jemima standing behind it and in front of the bed on which her patient quiety reposed, and so situated that the audience could have but a very imperfect view of any thing in the room but Jemima and the two sisters, to whom the secret had been confided. Jemima commenced the ceremonies with a short exhortation, in which she discanted largely upon the fidelity, the virtue and piety of their suffering sister, the great loss her death would occasion to the Society, and how thankful they should all be in case the beloved could be restored to health, and required them to join with her in a fervent supplication to the Father, that the sick might be made whole. She then prayed for a considerable time with great earnestness, and ended with a petition that their dearly beloved, sick, and dying sister, might be immediately restored to health. Then turning to the bed she took hold of the young woman's hands, and raised her up to a sitting posture, and spoke to her, when to the astonishment of all present, she answered in a strong distinct voice, and effectually convinced them that she was as well as any one of them. Jemima then returned thanks for the sudden restoration of one of the Lambs of the flock, gave her visitors her blessing, and sent them home to their suppers. The next day many of the followers called to see the person who had been raised, as they supposed, from death's door, and to congratulate her on her speedy recovery. As Jemima would not permit her to see company out of her presence, there was no opportunity of any explanation except such as would continue the cheat, and the followers believing that she had been very sick, and now seeing her in perfect health, were ready to affirm unequivocally that Jemima had performed a most wonderful miracle, and believed that those who denied the divinity of her person, and the reality of her miracles, were without the hope or posibility of salvation. This performance was much better authenticated than the former one, and for a while gained her great credit with the members of the Society; and the farce was performed with so much skill and address, and the reality of the miracle so vehemently and unanimously affirmed to by the followers, that an impression was made upon the minds of a few credulous persons, who soon after joined the Society.

By this happy contrivance she not only extricated herself from the most difficult and dangerous predicament in which she had ever been placed, but obtained new laurels to her earthly crown, by adding to her catalogue another most remarkable and well authenticated miracle. It was firmly believed by all her followers, and by many others not doubted, that the girl had been at the point of death, and they all now saw her in the enjoyment of a full measure of health and strength, without exhibiting the least trace of the ravages of the terrible disease with which they supposed she had been recently afflicted. It was in their opinion, a miraculous recovery, produced not by the ordinary means of the healing art, nor by human agency, but by the immediate interposition of Almighty power, manifesting itself in the person of the "Universal Friend of Mankind," to convince an unbelieving world of the sanctity of her mission and the divinity of her person. Those therefore, who still withheld their belief in these unhallowed pretences, were in the broad road to destruction, and those who were satisfied with the delusion, and were zealous to spread the fame of the Friend, and the account of her mighty doings, were sure of the rewards which she never failed to promise to the faithful, and to those who should "persevere to the end." But the danger of detection from which Jemima had so narrowly escaped, made a lasting impression upon her mind, and induced her to resolve never again to attempt a miracle.

A very particular and most exaggerated account of this hypocritical farce was transmitted to the governess and leading members of the Society in Pennsylvania, which was read and listened to with extravagant admiration, by those confiding and deluded people.

The effect produced by the receipt of this grateful intelligence was even greater than was anticipated by Jemima, and was sufficient to serve the purposes of the holy sisterhood for a considerable time; for the followers, by endeavoring to impose a belief in this miracle upon others, so committed themselves, as to the verity of the facts and the undoubted ability of their Idol to perform these wonders, that they had no pretence ever after to ask her to undertake a like performance; and she, remembering the danger of detection to which she had been exposed in this instance, very prudently resolved never again to hazard her character and consequence by a further prosecution of this miracle-making business.

Some time after, however, the whole mystery of this shallow cheat was unveiled with a full disclosure of all the circumstances attending it. On the discovery of the robbery of the Treasury, Jemima fled from Rhode Island with such precipitation, that she had neither time nor opportunity to give directions for the police and good government of the flock in her absence, but left the faithful to shift for themselves. The young woman who Jemima intended to have raised from the dead, in case she could have persuaded her to die, and upon whom this most invaluable miracle had been wrought, was now no longer under the control of Jemima, and being left to the government of herself, was one of the first to abandon all connexion with the remnant of this broken Society, and to expose the cheats and mock mysteries by which their loving mistress had governed and fleeced her unfortunate followers, and among other things, gave a detailed account of the conduct of Jemima in relation to this pretended miracle.

After succeeding in the establishment of her Societies in New England, and securing an almost absolute control of the members in respect to their spiritual concerns, Jemima began, very early, to evince a strong propensity to intermeddle in the direction and disposal of their temporal affairs. She found no difficulty in learning the secret history of every family to which any one of her followers belonged, and was always regularly informed of all incidents, which from time to time occurred in any part of the Society, which were carefully treasured up and held in reserve to be resorted to as occasion might require. The first and greatest object of her anxious cares was the accumulation of a fortune which should at once render her independent of any contingencies which might happen to the Society, and the ordinary vicissitudes of human life, and enable her to maintain that superiority in her style and equipage, to which her pride and ambition always aspired. And although the professions, and probably the opinions of Jemima underwent many mutations and changes during her priesthood, yet, in this respect, she was always uniform; her avarice increased with her years, and continued until the close of her eventful career.

Next to her ambition and zeal in the acquirement of wealth, she was distinguished by her constant assiduity in prying into, and endeavoring to control, the private family concerns of her followers; and in early life arrogated to herself the right of negociating or prohibiting matches among the younger members, in all cases giving or withholding her consent, as should best suit her own interested views. In these matters she became a most able and skilful manager; she obtained the entire disposal of her unmarried followers, no one daring to contravene her injunctions, whatever violence their inclinations might suffer by a compliance. But in respect to herself, she was far less fortunate. Unwilling to sacrifice her affections or her vanity upon the altar of expediency, and being unable to draw into her clutches any one to whom she would consent to surrender her independence, she was a long time tossed between hope and fear, and was alternately the victim of her inclinations and her pride. Although she found no difficulty in procuring husbands for her sisters, and other female followers, yet every attempt to accommodate herself was frustrated, either by her own self-importance, or the inconstancy of her admirers. That season of life in which she could reasonably expect to form an advantageous connection was fast passing away—attentions from the other sex, to which she had been long accustomed, and which never failed to flatter her vanity, were gradually withdrawn, and she at length awakened to the mortifying reality that she was abandoned by all her acquaintance, excepting those deluded beings who had surrendered themselves entirely to her direction, and whom she despised for that very weakness and folly which had rendered them subservient to her authority. Her unfortunate acquaintance with the British officer at New-Port, and the bitter recollection of the consequences which resulted from it, rankled in her breast, she became disgusted with the idea of matrimony, and finally, when all hope of an eligible settlement had fled forever, she made up her mind to remain single, and devote herself to the care and government of her flock. But she had not, as yet, discovered that marriage was an enormous crime, the commission of which would subject its perpetrator to eternal misery.

Sarah Richards, who has been already mentioned as one of Jemima's followers, was an interesting and accomplished woman, and had more talent and address than any other member of the Society, and, saving the credit which Jemima had with her followers as their spiritual leader, she was in all respects her equal. Sarah had been reputably married, and had lived a short time very happily with her husband. But on the birth of her child, she had, through a painful and protracted illness, suffered almost everything but death itself, and on her recovery, she made a most solemn vow, that she would never be the mother of another child. She afterwards abandoned her husband and joined herself to Jemima's household, bringing her daughter Eliza with her, who was now about two years old.

From the circumstances already related, it will appear that both these women had, though from different motives, resolved on the same course of life. After becoming initiated into the mysteries of the sisterhood, Sarah Richards proposed the idea of prohibiting matrimony among the followers, to which Jemima readily assented, and this new item was without delay added to her creed, and preparations immediately made for promulgating it to the members of the Society.

Jemima relied principally on the influence of her dreams and visions, and her authority over her people, for a compliance with this new requisition. In support of this doctrine, she quoted the 12th, 13th and 15th verses of the 6th chapter of Romans, with many other passages of Scripture, and cited the example of Sarah Richards, whom she represented to them as a holy woman, who, on becoming acquainted with her duty to God, had left her husband and devoted herself to the service of the Lord, and the welfare of the Society. She represented marriage as a foul stain upon the character of a professor of religion, and upon religion itself, and as an abomination which could not be indulged in but at the hazard of eternal misery. She denied that it was an institution sanctioned by divine authority, or that it was consistent with the duty of man to his Maker. She said it was an invention of wicked men, for the purpose of enslaving the female part of the creation, and seducing them from the paths of religion and their duty to the Lord, and that it must be renounced by every man and woman who hoped for salvation. She said (to use her own words) that it was "the damnable doctrine of heresy, and came from the bottomless pit, whither all those would be sent who did not immediately reject it." The introduction of this doctrine by Jemima, and the manner of enforcing it among her people, has been before mentioned; we will therefore now proceed to take notice of the consequences arising from it, together with some anecdotes intimately connected with this part of her history.

Deborah Wilkinson, Jemima's younger sister, was yet unmarried, and a mutual attachment existed between her and a young man of the name of Benajah Botsford, who occasionally paid her his attentions; and at the time that Jemima first published her interdict against matrimony, they were engaged, and expected soon to be married: But Jemima fulminated her anathemas with such vigor and authority, as to check the proceedings of the young couple, and to induce them for a while to lay aside all thoughts of a union. They both belonged to the society, and being extremely unwilling to provoke the resentment of Jemima, or brave the censures of their fellow members, they agreed to give up all further thoughts of marriage, and confine themselves to a mutual interchange of friendly sentiments and kind offices, which they vainly imagined would secure their happiness through life.

But the laws of nature were not thus to be trifled with; the spark of affection had been kindled, and they soon found that all their efforts to repress its effects served but to light it into a flame which they could neither control nor conceal. Jemima, alarmed at this backsliding in two of her favorite followers, and fearing that if they set at nought her counsels and disobeyed her commands, her authority over the other members would be materially weakened, resolved upon a measure which, if successful, would gratify her spleen and secure the obedience of her followers; and if unsuccessful, would leave her where she began. This was to banish Botsford. She summoned him into her presence, and read him a most terrible lecture on his fall from grace, and his disobedience of the commands of the Lord, reproached him with giving himself up to the dominion of the flesh and the service of the devil, and with attempting to allure to destruction one of the dearest lambs of the Lord's flock, and enjoined him in the most severe terms not to jeopardize the present and eternal welfare of both Deborah and himself. And as she had discovered that they would be in continual danger of committing the abominable crime of fornication, (for such she accounted all intercourse between husband and wife,) unless they were separated until they could effectually subdue their unruly passions, she was under the necessity of directing him to leave the country and never return thither without her permission. She ordered him to start immediately for Nova Scotia, and denounced against him the most tremendous curses in case he did not forthwith obey her commands. She insisted upon his taking up his cross and pursuing his journey without a murmur, and cautioned him not to loiter by the way, nor cast a longing, lingering look behind; reminding him of the punishment inflicted upon Lot's wife for looking back when fleeing out of Sodom.

Poor Botsford, who had been a submissive subject of Jemima, and was much esteemed by his fellow members, now considered his doom as finally fixed. He had, therefore, nothing to do but to pack up his scanty wardrobe and commence his journey. He pursued his way with cheerful diligence, consoling himself under his hard destiny, with the reflection that he was fulfilling his duty, and with the hope that obedience and repentance would in time procure for him a full pardon and permission to return to his native land. Deborah was much disappointed and distressed on learning the fate of Botsford; she had a strong attachment for him, and had long been wavering between her allegiance to Jemima and her affection for her lover. But seeing no prospect of mending matters by quarreling with her sister, she silently acquiesced in the procedure, and applied herself with increasing assiduity in pleasing and assisting Jemima. After the lapse of about three years, Botsford obtained leave to return, upon the express condition, however, that he should make no farther advances in his courtship with Deborah:—But no sooner had they met again than the old flame burst forth with redoubled violence. Jemima, astonished and enraged at their temerity, summoned them into her presence, and gave them both a very angry and terrible scolding, threatening them with the most dreadful punishments, both here and hereafter, if they disobeyed her commands, and declared that if they did marry, she would cast them off forever, and would "never again speak to them, or of them, in time or eternity." After pronouncing this terrible malediction, she gave Botsford an abrupt and haughty dismissal, and ordered Deborah to her room.

They removed to the Lake country along with their friends, where they were soon after married, which so enraged Jemima, that, in part fulfilment of her threat, she refused during the residue of her life to speak to them or mention them on any occasion whatever.

Botsford died some years before Jemima. When on his death-bed, his wife sent an earnest request to her sister, to visit them, with which Jemima reluctantly complied. There were several of the neighbors present to whom she delivered a short exhortation, but even under these distressing circumstances she obstinately persevered in her refusal to speak to him, to mention his name, or even make any personal allusion to him.—Although Jemima was of an implacable temper, and never forgave those who were so unfortunate as to fall under her displeasure, without the most humble and abject submissions, yet it can scarcely be believed that she had cherished her resentment against her sister and brother for so many years. It is much more probable that her unnatural treatment of them, on this occasion, arose from the recollection of the rash promise which, in a moment of passion, she had made them, and the vain hope that by perseverance she should convince her followers that her decrees were immutable, and that what "The Friend" had once spoken was unalterable.

Although Jemima failed in many of her attempts to break up matches among the younger members of the Society, yet she succeeded in several instances effectually to separate those who were bound together by the most ardent attachment. They applied to her for permission to marry, and in the most humble terms besought her to have compassion on them and grant them a dispensation. But it was to no purpose that they pleaded their inability to conform to her precepts, the ardor of their attachments, or the distress they endured. In vain did they promise the most faithful and constant obedience to all her requirements, and entire devotion to the interests of the Society. Their entreaties served only to harden her heart and render her the more deaf to all their petitions; for by asking her consent in the first instance, they plainly showed that they dared not to intermarry without it; and it was a prominent trait in the character of this petty tyrant, never to yield a point, even of the smallest importance, in favor of any member of the Society, unless compelled by unavoidable necessity.

Having represented matrimony to be unlawful, and inconsistent with the spirit and principles of religion, it became necessary, in order to be consistent in her mischief, not only to endeavor to prevent the union of her followers, but to attack, and if possible, separate those who had been married previous to their acquaintance with her. As this part of her scheme was more difficult and hazardous in the execution, she proceeded to the undertaking with corresponding intrepidity and impudence, and although she failed in a few instances, yet a general and cheerful compliance was yielded in many cases where both husband and wife were under her influence. But with those members who were connected in wedlock with "*persons of the world,*" (a descriptive appellation given by Jemima to all who did not belong to her Society) she found much difficulty in enforcing a compliance with her requirements, and in some instances rendered the victims of her incantations the most miserable of human beings. Feeling the full force of all those natural and almost indissoluble ties which bind rational and accountable creatures to their families, and relations, and connect them together in the social circle, on the one hand, and on the other, fearing the authority, and dreading the displeasure of a being whom they believed held a mysterious intercourse with the world of spirits, and was the agent of Almighty power, fears, doubts and difficulties presented themselves on all sides: halting between two opinions, equally called upon to pursue, at the same time, two courses which led in opposite directions, and fearing to choose either, their struggles were long, painful and violent. But the withering, the *destroying* influence of Jemima at length prevailed; natural affection was hurled from her throne, the ties of kindred severed, and the unhappy devotees "*taking up their cross*," as they expressed it, abandoned their homes, their dearest connexions in life, and repaired to the standard of Jemima, and dedicated themselves to her service. Knowing the weakness of our nature, and the instability of all those resolutions which are taken in violation of the strongest affections which pervade the human breast, Jemima lost no time in securing the conquests which she thus gained over these deluded and unhappy beings. Nor was this a difficult task. She had learned much of human nature, and from long experience and close attention, she readily understood the character of her new proselytes, the state of their minds, and the most effectual means of engaging their affections and securing their confidence. She received them with a mixture of gracious condescension and solemn dignity, and commended the zeal and faith which they had manifested in giving up the pleasures, the fashions and the follies of a wicked world, and devoting themselves to the service of their Lord. She treated them with kindness and indulgence, and exhorted them to wean themselves from the objects of their former affections, which they had now left behind, and surrender themselves entirely to her guidance and direction, as the only means of escaping those terrible calamities which she denounced against all those who contemned her counsels and rejected her creed. Her care and attentions were unremitted until she believed them so firmly fixed in the faith that there would be no danger of desertion, when they were necessarily neglected, in some measure, to enable her to bestow the same attentions on other new converts, while the strictness of her discipline was gradually increased.

This change in her demeanor occasioned many to abandon her after an acquaintance of several years. But some few were so wrought up by the various contrivances of their adroit governess, that nothing could ever shake their confidence in the Friend, or awaken them to a sense of their duty to themselves or their families. One of the followers of this description was the wife of a respectable merchant in Providence, who, during the rambles of Jemima in that neighborhood, had become acquainted with her, listened to her new scheme of religion, and at length became so infatuated with it, that she abandoned her family and joined the Society, from which neither the solicitations of her friends, the cares of her family, nor the calls of duty, were ever able to detach her. There are, perhaps, but few instances to be found in modern history of a more fatal delusion than was evinced by this misguided fanatic. She had been married several years, was reputably connected, well provided for and surrounded by almost every object which could render life comfortable and pleasant, and attach her to her family, friends and society. Her husband had always treated her with the kindest indulgence, and since their union, had never remitted in those delicate attentions which had marked his earliest acquaintance with her, and their dwelling had been the seat of uninterrupted tranquility and happiness. But the destroyer came;—a female adventurer, an itinerant dreamer and pretender to visions and revelations, with her wandering tribe, made her appearance, and alas, this fair picture of human felicity was changed to that of misery and despair. This deluded creature suddenly abandoned her home, joined the sisterhood, and shortly after accompanied Jemima in one of her rambles to Pennsylvania.

This precipitate step produced a shock to the mind of her too fond husband, from the effects of which he never recovered. Seeing all his hopes of prosperity and happiness thus blasted, he gave himself up, a prey to grief, a settled and deep melancholy succeeded, his health rapidly declined, and in less than a year after the commencement of his misfortunes, death closed the distressing scene.

With the victim of Jemima's incantations it fared but little better. She had been much flattered and caressed by her new friends as long as they entertained hopes of adding her husband to the Society, and his wealth to the common stock. But on learning his fate, and seeing that there was no prospect of reaping any benefit from the adhesion of their new proselyte, those attentions by which she had been distinguished, and which had induced her to believe herself a person of consequence in the congregation of the faithful, were gradually withdrawn, and she was at length reduced to the distressing alternative of departing the domicil of her *friend*, and seeking the means of her own support among strangers, or of taking her station in Jemima's kitchen, as one of the domestics of the family. She preferred the latter, and here lingered out a short, degraded and miserable existence, forgotten by the friends of her youth, unheeded by her companions in disgrace, and despised and neglected by her unfeeling mistress, who had been the cause of her seduction, and the agent of the ruin of her family.

Jemima's denunciations of matrimony, and the pains which she took, in all cases where her influence afforded a prospect of success, to separate those who had been joined in wedlock previous to her acquaintance with them, and particularly where only one of the parties became a follower, constitute the most striking, and perhaps the most interesting part of her history: and when contrasted with the assiduity with which she conducted the business of match-making in the early part of her career, afforded the strongest evidence of the hypocrisy and falsehood of her pretensions to the character of a prophet and teacher of religion. The attempts also, which she made, from time to time, to enforce a compliance with this part of her creed, produced many singular incidents, some of which were attended with circumstances of the most distressing nature, while others were exceedingly amusing in themselves, and tended much to the detection of the impostures which she attempted to practice upon her ignorant disciples.

Jemima had made a strong impression upon the mind of a young woman of her neighborhood, who occasionally attended her meetings, and who at length became a member of the Society. This person had been married but a short time, was eligibly situated, happy in the domestic circle, and many years yet remained, in which it was reasonable to suppose, that that circle might be extended. The Friend professed the greatest regard for her eternal welfare, and constantly treated her with the most kindly attentions, and as she gradually stole upon the confidence and affections of her victim, she cautiously introduced, from time to time, the subject of the unlawfulness of marriage; and when she thought herself entirely secure in her conquest, attempted to enforce upon her new convert an observance of her decrees, and finally succeeded in convincing her that it was her duty to separate herself from her husband. But as she was ardently attached to him and to her family, she requested permission still to *reside* with him, and Jemima entertaining strong hopes that he would also become a member, gave her consent, upon condition that the *non-intercourse act* should be faithfully carried into execution. The husband of this woman possessed a sound understanding, mild temper, and patient mind; he was aware of the true character of Jemima and of the motives which governed her conduct, and for some time had observed, with painful anxiety, the growing partiality of his wife for that deluded sect and its crafty leader, and began to entertain fears that, unless she could be weaned from her new attachments, the total ruin of his family was not far distant. Relying upon her prudence, the integrity of her heart, and the correctness of those principles in which she had been educated, he had indulged her inclination to attend the Friend's meetings, and now discovered her mind to be so deeply affected as to render unsafe any sudden attempt to control or dissipate her delusion. He therefore endeavored by persuasion, by the perusal of religious books and the exercise of reason, to dispel those mists by which her vision was obscured, and to shake her confidence in the perfection of her mistress, but went no further than an earnest request, in his attempts to prevent her from visiting the Friend, or attending her meetings. By these mild methods, he partially succeeded in enlightening her mind. Her zeal became somewhat abated, her scruples on the subject of Jemima's *prohibition*, were in some measure removed, and tranquility and domestic felicity again visited their dwelling, and, in process of time, this interesting family received an addition to its numbers by the birth of a promising son.

Jemima had long rested in perfect security, as it respected the fidelity and devotion of this woman, and the apparent acquiescence of the husband in the execution of her *prohibitory decree*, strengthened her hopes of adding him to the number of her disciples. She was therefore not only disappointed, but highly offended to find that her precepts had been disregarded. She visited the family some time after, with the intention of calling her follower to a severe account for her disobedience; but finding her extremely debilitated, from a painful and protracted illness, occasioned by a premature exposure to cold soon after the birth of her child, she smothered her resentment and determined on pursuing more mild measures for reclaiming and restoring this wandering sheep to the true fold.

During her gradual recovery, Jemima made her several visits, and represented to her the great enormity of the offence of which she had been guilty in neglecting the voice of wisdom and the counsels of the Friend; and that her late dangerous illness was a signal manifestation of the wrath of Heaven, upon those who sinned against light and knowledge, and that but for the mediation of the Friend, she could never have recovered. She therefore, with many professions of love and affection for her dear soul, enjoined it upon her never to be guilty of the like offence again, assuring her at the same time that her future and uninterrupted obedience was the only condition upon which her pardon and restoration to health had been obtained, and that in case she should become the mother of another child, the period of its birth would inevitably be that of her death. These idle pretences, together with many other ghostly admonitions, being pressed upon the debilitated mind of this unhappy woman, made a deep impression, and at length recalled in her those sentiments of respect for Jemima, and devotion to her cause, which she had formerly entertained. She received a full pardon in due form from the "Universal Friend," renewed her faith, was restored to regular membership, and continued a steadfast and faithful disciple for more than two years. But the laws of nature and the decrees of fate are immutable, and the commands of Jemima were again found insufficient to counteract the operations of the one, or prevent the fulfilment of the other. Her *dear friend* whose conversion and fidelity had cost her so much exertion, care and watchfulness, once more found herself in a situation, which, in due time, must expose her to the frowns and maledictions of Jemima. She was in great trouble, and remembering the condition upon which she had, on a former occasion, been pardoned, she resolved to repair to the "Universal Friend," and make a full and humble confession of all her sins, in the hope of so far propitiating her mistress as to obtain some mitigation of punishment, if not a full pardon; and asked the opinion of her husband as to the propriety of the measure. But he had become sickened and disgusted with the frauds and hypocrisy practiced by Jemima, and on learning the substance of her communications to his wife during her previous confinement, he blamed himself for not having long before prohibited all intercourse between them. He very freely gave her his opinion, that Jemima was a vile impostor, had ruined many of her dupes, and that unless she abandoned the Society her destruction and the misery of her family were certain; and absolutely forbid her holding any further communion with them. She thereupon grew thoughtful and melancholy, her appetite failed, her sleep was but a series of broken slumbers and troubled dreams, and her husband soon became alarmed at the visible decline of her health. Knowing that it was pretended by the members of the Society that Jemima was acquainted with their secret thoughts, words and actions, and that his wife was also impressed with the belief, he enquired of her whether she would be satisfied that the Friend was an impostor in case it could be proved, in such a manner as would preclude the possibility of mistake, that this pretence was false, and that Jemima was as ignorant of their *private family affairs* as any other person? to which she readily answered in the affirmative, believing that such evidence could never be produced, and being at the same time determined, in case it ever should be furnished, to abandon her and the Society altogether. He then advised her to go and visit the Friend, but by no means to mention her situation, nor allude to the circumstances which had occasioned her present anxiety, assuring her, that if Jemima was not, as had been often asserted, a vile impostor and hypocrite, she must be then in possession of these facts, and would immediately take her to task for her disobedience; a moment's reflection convinced her of the propriety of this course, and she promised him that she would conduct herself accordingly. On her arrival she found the Friend paraded in her elbow chair, with two of her minions seated at a little distance, one on the right and the other on the left, and at the opposite side of the room three or four of her followers to whom she was giving audience. Jemima pointed to a chair, and the visitor being seated, a profound silence ensued for two or three minutes, when the former unbending a little from the stately gravity which she was accustomed to assume on the entrance of visitors, addressed the other as follows,—"the Friend is very glad to see thee, it is nearly a fortnight since thee hast been here, is thee well?" "Very well," answered the other. "*Is the man that thee lives with well?*"* Being answered in the affirmative, she proceeded, "thee must visit the Friend often, for thee knows the temptations to which thee is exposed, and thy liability to go astray, and it is well to commune often with the *Lord*, that thee may be preserved from falling. Thee has been once disobedient, and committed a very great crime, but the Lord has pardoned thee upon condition that thee shall not again be guilty of the same offence." She continued her discourse for some time, and commended the penitence and reformation of her disciple, and the constancy and *self-denial* with which she had observed the precepts of their religion, and adhered to the path of rectitude, since receiving her pardon; she encouraged her to persevere in the true faith, and continue in the course she had pursued since her restoration to favor, for which she would receive the reward of the righteous. But in case she should again fall from grace, and be guilty of bearing another child, she would be cast off forever without the possibility of pardon, and that from thenceforth the doors of mercy would be eternally closed against her. This lecture effectually

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* Jemima would never mention *husband* or *wife* in

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her conversations with any person in relation to their families, but always said "the *man*," or "the *woman*, thee lives with."

opened the eyes of this deluded follower, and convinced her, that instead of knowing her *secret* thoughts and actions, as she had falsely pretended, this impostor was as ignorant of her *private conduct* as any other woman in the neighborhood; and the reverence and veneration which she had before entertained for Jemima immediately gave place to disgust and abhorrence, insomuch that, as she afterwards declared, it was difficult for her to preserve that decorum and sedate deportment which the rules of good breeding required, during the residue of her visit.

The fatal spell being once broken, she readily discovered an easy explanation of a multitude of circumstances which had before appeared mysterious and unaccountable, and her greatest wonder now was, not that she had thus suddenly regained her reason, but that she had ever been deprived of it by those shallow artifices by which Jemima governed her vassals. On her return home she gave her husband a circumstantial account of her interview with the Friend, and acknowledged with tears of affection and gratitude, his kindness and care in extricating her from the toils of that unprincipled deceiver.

From the circumstances which have

been stated in relation to the operations of Jemima while she resided in Pennsylvania, it will be seen that her friend Mr. W. was probably one of the most obedient and devoted disciples in her whole train. His wife was an attendant at the meetings of the Society, and for several years had a high respect for the Friend, but was never fully convinced that she was the Messiah. But with all the respect of the one and devotion of the other, Jemima was never able to bring them to acknowledge, *practically*, the unlawfulness of their marriage contract, or that it was a crime for them to live together as husband and wife. Some time after the promulgation of Jemima's family interdict, Mrs. W., in defiance of her orders and in contempt of her authority, gave birth to a fine lovely daughter. This jealous and despotic ruler, had taken unwearied pains to secure the entire acquiescence of this couple in all the requirements of her system of religion, as their example, whether of compliance or disobedience, would materially affect her authority over the other members of the Society; and as they had already four or five children, enough, as she thought, to satisfy them, she had flattered herself that they would not be guilty of an infraction of a decree, the observance of which was of vital importance to the stability of her government. She was therefore much alarmed and highly enraged at this open contempt of one of the fundamental principles of her religion, from so dangerous a quarter.

As soon as the mother was sufficiently recovered to be able to receive company, Jemima made them a visit, and took them severely to task for this criminal departure from the path of duty. She said they had broken the command of the Lord, had been guilty of a voluntary transgression, and had committed a most enormous sin, and that nothing but perpetual and sincere repentance, and future *abstinence* could ever atone for the guilt of this crime, or procure a pardon for the multiplied offences which she well *knew* they had committed. She told them that they ought to *lament* this deplorable fall from grace as long as they lived, and as she foresaw that they would be again in danger of yielding to the like temptation, unless they had some striking memento constantly before their eyes, she insisted on naming the child "*Lamentation*," that thereby its birth should be remembered, in all future time, as a cause of *lamentation* and grief to themselves and as an admonition to others. This absurd quirement was cheerfully acquiesced in by the father, and in compliance with his wishes, at length assented to by the mother, and the child was named accordingly.

But the influence and authority of the Friend was insufficient to preserve her dear disciples from a repetition of the offence, as was proved by the birth of another daughter about two years after. Jemima had received notice of the approaching event, from one of her runners, some time before it happened, but postponed the expression of her displeasure until the period of the mother's confinement, as the most favorable moment for making a lasting impression on her mind. She made her visit accordingly, armed with all the terrors of her indignation and wrath, and delivered a most violent lecture upon the misdeeds of these two persevering sinners; and ended with saying that it was "an *abomination* unto the Lord," and declared that the child should be named "*Abomination.*" Jemima had by this time become so boisterous and abusive as to fatigue and offend the good woman, and the impudent attempt to stigmatise her innocent offspring by giving it such a barbarous name, outraged her feelings beyond endurance, and she desired Jemima to leave the house. "The Friend," finding she had gone rather too far, attempted to retrace her steps and bring the matter to an amicable conclusion. But the old lady had become heartily disgusted with her impertinent interference on the former occasion, and was very willing to come to an open rupture with her upon the first occasion that should present itself. She accused her of cruelty and malevolence in disturbing the quiet, and destroying the happiness of private families, and plainly told her that her whole scheme of religion was a mere system of imposition, fraud and avarice; that her hostility to matrimony and the propagation of the human species was dictated by spleen and envy at the happiness which others enjoyed in the domestic circle, and which, but for her own misconduct in early life, she might undoubtedly have possessed in common with the rest of her sex: that notwithstanding all her pretenses to purity, she was no better than she should be, as it respected her acquaintance with *men*, and as she had no occasion for her company, ordered her in the most peremptory manner, to go about her business and never show her detested face in her house again.

This rebuff was delivered in such a

resolute manner, and the immediate departure of Jemima was so vehemently insisted upon, that she was obliged to retreat without the ceremony of a parting farewell, and what grieved her much more sorely, was that she saw no prospect of ever being able to regain her influence over this devoted family.

Jemima had always been accustomed to deal out her anathemas with a most liberal hand, against those who offended her, or withdrew themselves from the Society. But in this instance she was obliged to hold her peace and smother her resentment. She was known to be under so many obligations to this man, particularly for his assistance and hospitality, and in return for which, she had bestowed on him so many commendations, and for his piety and liberality in "*lending to the Lord*," had so often and so publicly held him up to the other members of the Society, as an example worthy of all imitation, that she dared not to denounce vengeance against him, nor persevere in a quarrel with him or his family. He also had committed himself by defending his faith and justifying the conduct of the Friend, on so many and such public occasions, that he felt equally averse to the continuance of a broil between her and his family; and his wife, now considering herself independent of the superintending care and spiritual assistance of the woman she despised, was willing to forgive Jemima, and forget, if possible, the outrage which she had committed on her feelings, provided she should not again be subjected to the assaults of her insolence and malice. The matter therefore, by the common consent of all parties, went quietly to sleep, and the old gentleman adhered to the Society, in a state of passive membership, during the residue of his life; and this crafty and politic manager, who could always accommodate her religion and morality to any circumstances which promised success to her enterprises, finding that she could not enforce their obedience to this favorite article of her creed, not only forgave him, unsolicited, this enormous and almost unpardonable sin, but afterwards when the same offence was repeated, in the birth of their youngest child, she took good care to say nothing on the subject which would be likely to wound his feelings or offend his wife. But this instance of toleration was almost a solitary exception to her general rule, and to this she was driven by necessity, which was the only law that ever controlled her conduct or limited her in the gratification of her desires. Every measure which was dictated by her caprice or avarice, however unimportant in itself, was prosecuted with the same energy and perseverance as if it had been an object of the greatest moment; and her exertions in compelling the acquiescence and co-operation of her followers, were always continued until they were crowned with entire success, or met with a total defeat. Her boldness and fortitude, or rather *obstinacy* form the most prominent trait in her character, and are strikingly illustrated in every important undertaking which marked her eventful career.

In establishing a new system of religion, Jemima was particularly careful to imitate, as little as possible, the forms and ceremonies of every sect and denomination of Christians. She never adopted any regular code of ordinances for the temporal government and discipline of her flock—whether she found a difficulty in framing any set of rules for this purpose, without copying after some other system, and thereby forfeiting her claim to originality, or whether she chose to make her *will* the law of the Society, and to subject the members to the domination of her capricious mind, is uncertain; but it is well known that she issued her commands to her followers, rewarded some and punished others, and dispensed threats and promises from time to time, as circumstances occurred, without regard to precedents, and without the aid of any general rules whereby the members could regulate their deportment. The summary manner in which she exercised her authority, and the tame submission of her people, secured her against the charge of partiality; for if any one complained of her tyranny and oppressions, (which rarely ever happened,) they were sure to be answered, "It is the *will* of the Universal Friend," and there the matter ended; for she would never condescend to explain the reasons of her conduct, nor suffer others to do it for her. *It was her prerogative to give orders and directions, and their business to obey them*, and in process of time these principles, being reduced to practice, and sanctioned by long and uninterrupted usage, and the common consent of all parties concerned, became at length a law to the members, and the only basis upon which the secular government of the Society rested.

The administration of their spiritual affairs was regulated much after the same manner. Jemima published certain directions for the government of the religious conduct and communion of her followers, and although this was done by way of advice, yet a most scrupulous and conscientious obedience was always exacted. These admonitions also varied from time to time, according to the several mutations which her system underwent, and the mood in which she happened to be, or the interested motives by which she might be governed, at the moment of dispensing them. That part of her *advice* in which she was most uniform and consistent, and which seems to have been the most disinterested, was the following:—

"The Public Universal Friend adviseth all who desire to be one with the Friend in spirit, and wise unto salvation, that they be punctual in attending meetings, as many as conveniently can; that they meet together at the tenth hour of the day, as near as may be; that those who cannot well go to meetings sit down at their several homes about the time meeting begins, in order to wait for and upon the Lord; that they shun, at all times, the company of the wicked world, as much as possible; and when any of you are under a necessity of being with them, that you do your business with few words, and retire from them as soon as you can get your business done, remembering to keep on your watch, and pray for assistance, especially when the wicked are before you; that you do not enquire after the news or public reports of any one, and be careful not to spread any yourselves that is not of the Lord; that you deal justly with all men, and do unto all men as you would be willing they should do unto you; and walk orderly that none occasion of stumbling be given by you to any; do good unto all as you have opportunity, especially to the household of faith; live peaceably with all men, as much as possible; in a special manner do not strive against one another for mastery, but all of you keep your ranks in righteousness, and let not one thrust another; let not debate, evil surmisings, jealousies, evil speaking or hard thinking, be named among you, but be at peace among yourselves; take up your daily cross against all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live as you would be willing to die, loving one another, forgiving one another as ye desire to be forgiven by God and the Holy One. Obey and practise the divine counsel ye have heard, or may hear, from time to time, living every day as if it were the last, remembering you are always in the presence of the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy;

and without holiness no man shall see the Lord in peace. Ye are to shun the very appearance of evil in all things, as foolish talking and vain jesting, with all unprofitable conversation, which is not convenient, but flee from bad company as from a serpent; and be not drunk with wine or any other spiritous liquors wherein is excess. And when you come into meetings or evening sittings, make as little stir as possible, that you may not disturb the solemn meditations of others. And endeavor to meet all at one time, and keep your seats until meeting is over, except on some extraordinary occasions. Use plainness of speech and apparel, and let your adorning not be outward but inward; and follow not after the follies and fashions of a wicked world, which lead down to the bottomless pit; but keep yourselves a separate and distinct people, even as ye are, the chosen of the Lord."

To conform to these directions, and such others as she occasionally gave them, and above all, to "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," and *yield obedience to all her commands*, was the great duty which her religion enjoined upon her followers, and the fulfilment of which would, as she taught them to believe, entitle them to eternal happiness. She rejected the sacraments, and almost all the doctrines, rites and ceremonies which are acknowledged or practised by the Christian church. She said that "baptism, as now used in the world, is altogether wrong, that there is but one baptism, that of John, which is preparatory to the coming of a greater than him." No singing or melodies were allowed in her meetings, and instead of cultivating a cheerful or lively expression of the feelings of piety and devotion, a surly gravity and mysterious gloom was inculcated, and during their hours of worship her congregation exhibited a group of the most devout looking faces that can well be imagined.

The most profound attention was alway paid to the exercises, which consisted in exhortations, lectures and preaching, and in the early part of her ministry prayers also were used. But the form and substance of the latter were said to be peculiar to herself, and somewhat resembled conversations with an invisible person, on the subject of her religion, the faith of her followers, and the welfare of the Society. But in all her prayers, or whatever else they might be called, she never alluded to Jesus Christ as a mediator, but frequently mentioned the "Father and the Holy One," and "God and his

Holy One"—and whenever she expressed any thing like a petition, it was addressed to God "for the sake of the Lamb which was slain." But for many years previous to her death she laid aside this part of public worship altogether, and some who were well acquainted with her supposed that prayer had never formed a part of her religious exercises. Her preaching consisted chiefly of quotations from scripture, interlarded with a few select sentences and excogitated phrases which she had prepared for the purpose, and which were always at her command. She had committed almost the whole of the Bible to memory, and on the slightest allusion being made to any part of it, she would repeat the language correctly and without the least hesitation. She was therefore always supplied with matter and language for her sermons, and but for the fatigue of talking, could as well preach a whole day as half an hour. The following extract comprises the form and substance, as well as can be recollected, of one of her discourses, and as they were all very nearly alike, this, with a few variations, may be considered a tolerable specimen of her whole system of sermonising.

"My beloved friends, on meeting together again to hear the word of the Lord and meditate on his goodness and gracious promises to the faithful, it behoves you to gather in your wandering thoughts, that you may sit down in solemn silence, and wait for the aid and assistance of the Holy Spirit, that ye may worship God and his Holy One in spirit and in truth, and in a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price, as saith the Psalmist, it is most like the King's daughter, who is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold. Consider how great a thing it is to worship God and the Lamb acceptably, who is a spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. Therefore deceive not yourselves by indulging drowsiness or other mockery, instead of worshiping God and the Lamb. God is not mocked, for such as each of ye sow the same ye must also reap; if ye sow to the flesh, ye must of the flesh reap corruption; but if ye are so wise as to sow to the spirit, ye will of the spirit reap life everlasting. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace; because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God;

but ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live; for as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby ye cry Abba Father. Ye cannot be my friends except ye do whatsoever I command you; therefore be not weary in well doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not. Those whose mouths have been opened to speak or pray in public, are to wait for the movings of the Holy Spirit, and then speak or pray as the Spirit giveth utterance, not running without divine authority, nor speak nor pray any longer than the Spirit remains with you, nor linger when moved to speak, as mouth for the Holy One, or moved to pray with the Holy Spirit, that all contention, strife, confusion, jarring or wrong speaking, may have no place among you; nor use any whispering among any of you, for whisperers separate chief friends. That above all, ye give all diligence to make your calling and election sure, and work out your salvation with fear and trembling, redeeming your time, because the days are evil. That ye may be found without spot or rebuke before the Lord; that ye may be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, where the morning stars sing for joy, and all the sons of God shout for joy, having oil in your vessels, with your lamps, like the wise virgins', trimmed and burning, having on your wedding garments, that when the Holy One ceaseth to intercede for this dying world, you may also appear with him in glory. Ye who are parents, or intrusted with the tuition of children, consider your calling and the charge committed unto you, and be careful to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and educate them in a just and and reverent regard thereto. And whilst you are careful to provide for the support of their bodies, do not forget the welfare of their souls, seeing the earliest impressions in general last the longest; as it is written, train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not easily depart from it; and let your examples teach as loud as your precepts. Children, obey your parents in all things in the Lord, for this is right and acceptable in the sight of God; and honor your father and your mother, and the way to honor father and mother is, not to give them flattering titles or vain compliments, but obey the counsel of the Lord, and obey them in the Lord. As saith the wisdom of the Lord by the mouth of the wise king Solomon, my son forget not my law, but let thine heart keep my commandments, for length of days, long life and peace shall they add to thee. Let not mercy and truth forsake thee, bind them about thy neck, write them upon the table of thine heart; so shall thee find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding; in all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes, but listen to the counsel of the 'Universal Friend,' and fear the Lord and depart from evil. Hear ye children the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding, for I give you good doctrine—forsake ye not my law. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son hear the instruction of thy father and forsake not the law of thy mother, for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck. My son, if sinners entice, consent thou not; if they say, come, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause, let us swallow them up alive as the grave, and whole as those that go down into the pit, we shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil; cast in thy lot among us, let us all have one purse—my son walk not thou in the way with them, refrain thy foot from their path; for their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood. They lay wait for their own blood. They lurk privily for their own lives; so is every one that is greedy of gain, that taketh away the lives of the owners thereof. And all of you be careful not to grieve away the Holy Spirit that is striving with you in this your day of visitation, and setting your sins and short comings in order before you; but turn ye at the reproofs of instruction, which is the way to life.

"Masters, give unto your servants that which is lawful and right, and deal with other people's children as you would be willing others should deal with you and your children also in your absence; knowing that whatsoever ye would that others do to you, ye ought to do likewise unto them, for this is the law and the prophets. Servants be obedient unto your masters according to the flesh, in singleness of heart, with fear and trembling, with good will doing service as unto the Lord, and not unto man, knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And you masters do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening, knowing that your master also is in Heaven. Neither is there respect of persons with him, but he is merciful and kind, even to the unthankful and to the evil. Therefore be ye wise in this your day and generation, be ye holy in all your walk and conversation, and all you *men* and *women*, that desire to be one with the Friend, and obedient unto the Lord, keep yourselves separate, and unspotted from the world, and from each other; and possess your vessels in sanctification and honor, knowing that ye ought to be temples for the Holy Spirit to dwell in; and if your vessels are unclean, that which is holy cannot dwell in you, and ye are yet in a reprobate state and out of favor with God and his Holy One.

"And think ye not to excuse yourselves for your disobedience, because, after the manner of a wicked world, ye have been joined together, according to the laws and fashions of men, for these are the inventions of the devil, and lead down to the bottomless pit, from whence they came; and thither shall all they go who yield themselves willingly to seduction, to depart from the truth, the way and the life. Obey God, and not man, for vain is the help of man, yet God is able to save all those who obey his word. And know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness:—I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh; for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof; neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. Be meek and humble, and strive not with the world, nor with one another, but be in peace all of you one with another always; seek not for the distinctions nor the honors of the wicked, nor strive for the mastery, nor think vainly of yourselves. nor attempt to lead others in Society or teach them, but with humility listen to the counsel of the '*Universal Friend*,' and obey the voice of the *Lord*. And all of you who have been or may be so divinely favored as to be mouth to the Holy One, I entreat you in the bonds of love that when you are moved upon to speak in public as the oracles of God, that you speak as the Holy Spirit giveth utterance, not withholding more than is meet, which tendeth to poverty, neither add thou to his words lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar: but do all with a single eye to the glory of God, that God and the Lamb may be glorified by you and through you. For he that winneth souls is wise, and the wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever. The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the gospel, that the kingdom of God may begin within you. He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God."

The foregoing constituted the principal ground work of all her preaching, and the substance of her discourses; and by being varied and repeated scores of times, and incorporated with such reflections as the particular occasion called for, together with the relation of three or four *dreams* and as many *visions*, generally made a sermon which occupied from two to three hours in the delivery.

In her public discourses she seldom mentioned her prohibition of matrimony in positive terms; but her allusions to this subject, on such occasions were distant and indirect, and couched in such general terms as to leave the auditor in doubt whether she intended it as a part of her system of religion. But in her private interviews with the *faithful*, and in her conversations with her visitors, she strenuously insisted upon this point as one of the essentials in religion, which could not be dispensed with. She said that men were the authors of sin,* and the means of perpetuating it on the earth; that the miseries to which mankind are subjected in this world, and the punishments which are reserved for the wicked in the next, are all to be charged to their account; and that it would have been far better for the human race if they had been all females, and men had never been created; that there was no necessity for their existence, and when sent into the world, they were always engaged in wrangles, strife and war, and that all the innumerable murders which had been committed since the world began, were attributable to them. And when it was remarked to her that the existance and union of the two sexes constituted the appointed means for the perpetuation of the human species, she replied that a better method might have been devised, and alluded to the incarnation of Jesus Christ "at his *first* appearance upon the earth," as a mode altogether preferable to that which is now practiced in the world. She said that should her doctrines in this respect prevail throughout the earth, the means would be provided for continuing a succession of the inhabitants thereof, as long as that should be necessary to the accomplishment of the great purposes for which man was created.

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* To prove this she quoted Rom., 5th, 12—" Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

The style of her epistolary writing was much the same with that of her preaching, consisting principally of quotations from scripture, irregularly strung together, without method or meaning, and having no direct application to the circumstances which were the pretended objects of her correspondence. We give a short extract of a letter dated "Stonington, 8th month, 1787"—written by Jemima's chief scribe, and by her direction, to one of the principal members of the Society at Worcester, in Pennsylvania, which may serve as a pretty good sample of the manner of her letter writing. After a few words in relation to some matter of business, the writer breaks out in the following strain:—

* * * "The greatest of all is the one thing needful, to make our calling and election sure; this I pray thee may not neglect; he that holds out to the end the same shall be saved, saith the Lord; keep in the valley of humiliation with a broken heart and melted spirit, such a sacrifice will not be despised; thy gentleness hath made me great, and I hope D**** will prove it true by experience; it is a day of trouble, but don't faint in the day of adversity and prove thyself to be small; what I say to one I say to all friends; watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation; my spirit runs much towards all friends in Pennsylvania; I long to see you that ye may be strengthened by

the mutual faith both of you and me, and built up in the most holy faith, that works by love and purifies the heart; I feel much love to all friends among you, and desire thee to bear it to them for me. What I write is from the heart, it is real and not feigned. Only rebel not against the Lord, and we shall ever come through him. He knows in whose heart his divine love is, and who obey his counsel. Let every one see this as though it was directed to them. O, press forward all of you with the word of the Lord in your mouth, and a two edged sword in your right hand. Above all have fervent charity for one another; in honor prefer one another; let each esteem another better than himself, let the stronger bear the infirmities of the weaker, and not please themselves but each please his neighbor, to the good of edification; and so run as to obtain; let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect, entire lacking nothing; so prayeth your true friend. When I forget thee O Jerusalem, my right hand will forget her cunning. I prefer the peace of Jerusalem above my chiefest joys; I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, not to stir up, nor awake, or grieve away my beloved, until he pleases. Peace be unto you, peace in believing, and joy in the Holy Ghost; let this be your case, that we may meet in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and be enfolded in the bosom of love and delight, and reign with the Lamb forever and ever."

It has been supposed by many persons who were well acquainted with Jemima, that she was sincere in her professions and declarations in relation to herself and her religion, and that she believed she was actually commissioned by divine authority to superintend the spiritual concerns of mankind, and to correct the errors of the present age. That being led astray in early life, by a religious frenzy, and not having the benefit of proper advice and instruction, while laboring under the first impressions of seriousness, she fell into, and settled down with, those errors and absurdities which characterised her ministry, and that in process of time she became confirmed in the belief of the truth of her doctrines, and the correctness of that course which she pursued during the residue of her life.

Those who have adopted this opinion concerning Jemima, supposed it possible that by silently pursuing an irregular train of thought, on the subject of religion, unassisted by the light of experience, and the instruction of wisdom, a young and ardent mind may become so bewildered in the intricate mazes of doubt and difficulty, to which it is but too often exposed, as to produce an almost entire derangement of the reasoning faculties, in relation to that particular subject; and finally become so far the victim of fanaticism and self delusion as to mistake the idle dreams of its own fancy and the wanderings of a diseased imagination, for heavenly inspirations and communications from the Almighty.

They supposed, also, that this species of delusion may some times exist in those whose mental perceptions, upon every other subject excepting that of religion, are as clear and distinct as those of any other person. By this mode of reasoning they have persuaded themselves that Jemima Wilkinson was an unfortunate fanatic, who, being in the first place ensnared in the absurd system which she promulgated, afterwards became the innocent cause of deceiving others. And the many unaccountable circumstances and inconsistencies which marked her public career, the incoherent manner of her preaching and the style of her correspondence with her followers, and above all, her perseverance in the same system to the end of her life, seem almost to justify this charitable conclusion. But those who knew enough of her private history to be able to judge of the motives which governed her conduct, entertained very different sentiments respecting her. In their opinion it is a violation of every rule of evidence by which the truth is most likely to be discovered, to suppose that she did not know with as much certainty as any other person, that she was simply *Miss Jemima Wilkinson*, and that she did not die and rise again from the dead in the year 1776. That she must have known, also, that she did not possess the power of discovering the secret thoughts of others, nor of healing the sick, nor of raising the dead. Common sense instantly rejects the idea that she could ever have so far stupified herself as not to remember her origin and family, and that she was neither more nor less than a mere woman. These were points upon which she could not, by any posibility, make a mistake; and yet it is a matter of public notoriety in the neighborhood of her residence in the state of Rhode Island, in Pennsylvania and in Ontario County, that she denied her family, her name, and her kindred, and laid claim to attributes, power and authority which appertain to no human being. Here arises the great difficulty in reconciling the extravagant accounts which she, and others by her direction, have, at various times and on divers occasions, given concerning her character and person; with the idea of her having been an unfortunate enthusiast who was deluded in her belief that the part she acted was a conscientious discharge of her duty to mankind.

And yet strange and unaccountable as it may appear, she persevered in her pretensions to the end of her life, as will appear from a perusal of her Will, wherein she describes herself as having been callld Jemima Wilkinson, in the year 1776, "and ever since that time the Universal Friend, *a new name which the mouth of the Lord hath named.*" Her care and anxiety respecting her property also, ended only with her days. Her relations and connections are numerous, some of whom stand in much need of that assistance which a participation in her bounty might have afforded; but none of them are mentioned, or even alluded to, in her Will. Indeed, it was not in the power of Jemima to make any provision for them without virtually acknowledging her kindred, and thereby undermining the base upon which she had reared the fabric of her religion.

Jemima was engaged in what she termed her "ministry," from the close of the year 1776, until July, 1819, when she closed her earthly career, at the advanced age of 68 years.

In contemplating the career of this extraordinary personage, there is in the minds of many, some difficulty in determining her true character. Her life, conduct and professions present a chapter of contradictions, and a series of gross absurdities. Her followers believe her to be their savior; many charitable disposed persons are of the opinion that she labored under a partial mental derangement, and was herself the victim of an unfortunate delusion by which she was deceived into the belief, that she was constituted, by divine appointment, a special messenger of grace and mercy to a lost and dying world; others there are, and by far the greater number of those that knew her, who believed her to have been a canting hypocrite, pretending to a character which she knew she did not possess, and that the principal object of all her labors was to secure the means of gratifying her own appetites. The first supposition cannot be true; the second is *possible*, and the last *probable*. But it is the business of History to record facts, and the privilege of the reader to draw his own conclusion.

There are sundry publications, respecting Jemima Wilkinson, which made their appearance in different places and at various periods during her life, and one or two since her death, which, as they show what opinions were entertained concerning her by different writers, it has been thought advisable to republish them in an Appendix to her History.

No. I,—Is contained in Hannah Adams' "*View of Religions*," published in 1801.

No. II,—Is extracted from "*Marshall's Catechism*," published in 1802.

No. III,—Is from a work entitled "*Eccentric Biography, or Memoirs of remarkable Female characters, ancient and modern*," published in 1804.

No. IV,—Is from a series of "*Original Letters from the interior of the State of New York*;" and made its appearance in the "*Balance and State Journal*," of March, 1811.

No. V,—Contains two communications, which appeared in the "*Pittsburgh Mercury*," in 1819, a short time after the death of Jemima.

No. VI,—Is "*The last Will and Testament of the person called the Universal Friend.*"

APPENDIX.

NO. 1.

"There were also a few persons in Rhode Island who adhered to Jemima Wilkinson, who was born in Cumberland. It is said by those who were intimately acquainted with her, that she asserted, that in October, 1776, she was taken sick, and actually died, and her soul went to Heaven where it still continues. Soon after, her body was reanimated with the spirit and power of Christ, upon which she set up as a public teacher; and declared she had an immediate revelation for all she delivered, and was arrived to a state of absolute perfection. It is also said, she pretended to foretel future events, to discern the secrets of the heart, and to have the power of healing diseases: and if any person, who had made application to her, was not healed, she attributed it to his want of faith. She asserted that those who refused to believe these exalted things concerning her, will be in the state of the unbelieving Jews, who rejected the counsel of God against themselves; and she told her hearers, that was the eleventh hour, and that the last call of mercy that ever should be granted them; for she heard an inquiry in Heaven, saying, "Who will go and preach to a dying world?" or words to that import: and she said she answered, "Here am I, send me;" and that she left the realms of light and glory, and the company of the Heavenly host, who are continually praising and worshiping God, in order to descend upon earth, and pass through many sufferings and trials for the happiness of mankind. She assumed the title of the Universal Friend of Mankind; hence her followers distinguished themselves by the name of Friends.*

"Jemima Wilkinson went to Geneva, in the Genesee country; and her followers have fallen off so as not to keep up any meetings in this State."

NO. II.

"Universal Friend, is the title assumed by Jemima Wilkinson, who was born in

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* The Duke of Rochefoucault, in his travels in the United States of America, in 1796 and 1797, met with Jemima Wilkinson, in the State of New York. He describes her to be a beautiful but artful woman. She however, experienced a very unfavorable reception for herself and her doctrines, both in Philadelphia and New York; though in the latter country she made some converts.

Rhode Island. She says, that in the year 1776, being sixteen years of age, she died, and when about to be buried, she was again quickened by a power from above, but not by her own soul, which, she says, is yet in Heaven. She says she then received a commission to preach. She tells her hearers that this is the *eleventh hour*, the last call of mercy; and that those who will not believe the exalted things she says of herself, will be in the state of the unbelieving Jews, who *neglected the counsel of God against themselves.* She pretends to immediate revelation of all which she delivers; and that she has arrived at a state of absolute perfection.

" When she left her situation above Germantown, near Philadelpaia, where she resided for some years, she emigrated to Genesee, in the State of New York. Here she gave out that she was the *woman to whom were given two wings of a great Eagle*, that she might flee into the wilderness into her place.* She pretends to heal diseases in a miraculous manner; and when persons are not cured, she ascribes it to their want of faith. She has a Society formed in Genesee, who believe in her *divine mission;* and whom she has taught to observe both the Jewish and Christian Sabbaths. Agreeable to her blasphemous pretentions, she has her linens marked with the letters I. H. S. (*Jesus Hominum Salvator.*")

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* Rev. xii, 14.

NO. III.

"Jemima Wilkinson, a Quaker, and a native of Rhode Island, who manifested so fervent zeal in her religion, that at the age of twenty she was admitted to all the meetings of the Society, which were held weekly, monthly, and quarterly, for settling the general concerns and watching over the conduct of the brethren. She at length fancied that she was called to act some good and extraordinary part and in this persuasion, formed the project of becoming the leader of a sect. In the course of a long and dangerous illness, she was suddenly seized with a lethargy, so that to her friends she appeared as really dead. She continued several hours in this situation; and preparations were actually making for her interment, when she suddenly started up, and called for her clothes, declaring "that she had risen from the dead, and that she had cast off all her material substance, and retained only the spiritual." She went accordingly to the next meeting, and as if with the authority of some celestial being, spoke there as one inspired, and gained some followers. She soon made some proselytes, and at the same time drew upon herself the displeasure of all who adhered to the old forms of the religion of the Quakers. She experienced, therefore a very unfavorable reception for herself and doctrines, both in Philadelphia and New York. Wherever she came every Quaker turned away from her with abhorrence, as the enemy of his religion; and all other persons deemed her a fool or an enthusiast. This disposition of the public she again called a persecution, it being favorable to her ultimate views. The number of her followers was now daily increasing; and as she confidently trusted that it would become still more considerable, she thought they might perhaps be willing to follow her. Accordingly, she proposed to a number of them to flee from these regions of intolerance, and to settle in a place where they might worship God undisturbed, and free from that bitter spirit of persecution which men had introduced in opposition to the divine will. Soon after, the country about Lake Seneca and Crooked Lake, was fixed upon as the place for their settlement. The company of New York which had purchased this land from the Indians, entered into a treaty for the sale of it with these reformed Quakers. They were promised three tracts of land, containing each six thousand square acres, and which were to form three districts, and to which Jemima instantly gave the name of Jerusalem. Thirty families removed hither with her; but she had confidently expected three or four hundred more, of whom, however, not above twenty at last arrived. This Society soon spread over the three districts, which it was to occupy; but it was not sufficiently numerous to replenish the fourth part of each. The enchantment however, had already been broken by Jemima's absence, and with it had also vanished their zeal for peopling the new land of promise.

"We saw Jemima, (says the Duke de la Rochefoucault Laincourt) and attended her meeting, which is held in her own house. We found there about thirty persons, men, women and children. Jemima stood at the door of her bed chamber, on a carpet with an arm chair behind her. She had on a white morning gown and waistcoat, such as men wear, and a petticoat of the same color. Her black hair was cut short, carefully combed, and divided behind into three ringlets; she wore a stock and white silk cravat, which was tied about her neck with affected negligence. In point of delivery, she preached with more ease than any other Quaker I have yet heard; but the subject matter of her discourse was an eternal repetition of the same topics—death, sin and repentance. She is said to be about forty years of age, but she did not appear to be more than thirty. She is of a middle stature, well made, of a florid countenance, and has fine teeth, and beautiful eyes. Her action is studied; she aims at simplicity, but there is somewhat pedantic in her manner. In her chamber we found her friend, Rachel Miller, a young woman about twenty eight or thirty years of age, her follower and admirer, who is entirely devoted to her. All the land which Jemima possesses is purchased in the name of Rachel Miller, an advantage she owes to her influence over her adherents, and to her dexterity in captivating their affections. Jemima, or the *Friend*, as she is called by way of eminence, inculcates, as her leading tenet, poverty and resignation of all earthly possessions. If you talk to her of her house, she always calls it "the house which I inhabit." This house however, though built only of the trunks of trees, is extremely pretty and commodious. Her room is exquisitely neat, and resembles more the *boudoir* of a fine lady, than the cell of a nun. It contains a looking glass, a clock, and an arm chair, a good bed, a warming pan, and a silver saucer. Her garden is kept in good order; her spring house is full of milk, cheese, butter, butcher's meat and game. Her hypocrisy may be traced in all her discourses, actions and conduct, and even in the very manner in which she manages her countenance. She seldom speaks without quoting the Bible, or introducing a serious sentance about death, and the necessity of making our peace with God. Whatever does not belong to her own sect, is with her an object of distaste and steadfast aversion. She sows dissentions in families, to deprive the lawful heir of his right of inheritance, in order to appropriate it to herself; and all this she does under the name and agency of her companion, who receives all presents brought by the faithful, and preserves them for her reverend friend, who, being wholly absorbed in her communion with Christ, whose prophetess she is, would absolutely forget the supply of her bodily wants, if she were not well taken care of. The number of her votaries has, of late, much decreased. Many of the families who followed her to Jerusalem, are no longer the dupes of her self interested policy. Some still keep up the outward appearance of attachment to her; while others have openly disclaimed their connection with Jemima. Such however, as still continue her adherents, appear to be entirely devoted to her. With these she passes for a prophetess, an indescribable being; she is not Jemima Wilkinson, but a spirit of a peculiar name, which remains a profound secret to all, who are not true believers: she is the friend, the all friend. Six or seven girls of different ages, but all young and handsome, wait upon her with surprising emulation, to enjoy the peculiar satisfaction of being permitted to approach this celestial being. Her fields and her garden are plowed and dug by the Friends, who neglect their own business to take care of hers; and the All-Friend is so codescending, as not to refuse their services; she comforts them with a kind word now and then, makes enquiries after, and provides for their health and welfare, and has the art of effectually captivating their affections, the more, perhaps, because she knows how to keep her votaries at a respectful distance.

When the service was over, Jemima invited us to dinner. The hope of watching her more narrowly, induced us to accept the invitation; but we did not then know, that it forms a part of the character she acts, never to eat with any one. She soon left us; and locking herself up with her female friend, sat down without other company, to an excellent dinner; we did not get ours till after she had dined. When our dinner was over, and also another, which was served up after ours, the sanctuary was opened again. And now Jemima appeared once more at the door of her room, and conversed with us seated in an arm chair. When strangers are with her, she never comes over the threshold of her bed room; and when by herself, she is constantly engaged in deliberation how to improve the demesne of her friend. The house was, this day, very full. Our company consisted of exactly ten persons; after us dined another company of the same number; and as many more dined in the kitchen. Our plates, as well as the table linen, were perfectly clean and neat; our repast, although frugal, was yet better in quality than any of which we had partaken since we had left Philadelphia; it consisted of good fresh meat, with pudding, an excellent sallad, and a beverage of peculiar, yet charming flavor, with which we were plentifully supplied out of Jemima's apartment, where it was prepared. The devout guests observed, all this while, a profound silence; they either cast down their eyes, or lifted them up to heaven with a rapturous sigh; to me they appeared not unlike a party of the faithful, in the primitive ages, dining in a church. The All-Friend, had by this time exchanged her former dress, for that of a fine Indian lady, which however, was cut out in the same fashion as the former. Her hair and eyebrows had again been combed. She did not utter a syllable respecting our dinner; nor did she offer to make any apology for her absence. Constantly engaged in personating the part she had assumed, she descanted in a sanctimonious, mystic tone, on death, and on the happiness of having been an useful instrument to others in the way of their salvation. She afterwards gave us a rhapsody of prophecies to read, ascribed to one Dr. Love, who was beheaded in Cromwell's time; wherein she clearly discerned, according to her accounts, the French Revolution, the decline and downfall of popery, and the impending end of the world. Finding, however, that this conversation was but ill adapted to engage our attention, she cut short her harangue at once.

"We had indeed, already seen more than enough to estimate the character of this bad actress, whose pretended sanctity only inspired us with contempt and disgust, and who is altogether incapable of imposing upon any person of common understanding, unless those of the most simple minds, or downright enthusiasts. Her speeches are so strongly contradicted by the tenor of her actions; her whole conduct; her expense compared to that of other families within a circumferance of fifty miles; her way of living, and her dress, form such a striking contrast with her harangues on the subject of condemning earthly enjoyments; and the extreme assiduity with which she is continually endeavoring to induce children, over whom she has any influence, to leave their parents, and form a part of her community; all those particulars so strongly militate against the doctrine of peace and universal love, which she is incessantly preaching, that we were all actually struck with abhorrence at her duplicity and hypocrisy, as soon as the first emotions of our curiosity subsided. Her fraudulent conduct, indeed, has been discovered by so many persons, and so much has been said against it, that it is difficult to account for her having any adherents at all, even for a short time. And yet she will probably retain a sufficient number, to increase still further a fortune, which is already considerable for the country in which she resides, and fully adequate to the only end which she now seems anxious to attain—namely, to live independent, in a decent, plentiful, and even elegant manner. There are so many weak minded religionists, and Jemima is so particularly careful to select her disciples among persons who are either very old or very young, that her imposture, however gross and palpable to the discerning, may yet be carried on for some time with success, sufficient to answer her ultimate purpose. If her credit should sink too low, she would find herself constrained to transplant her holiness to some other region; and in fact, she had last year, harbored the design of removing her family and establishment, and of settling on Carlton Island, in the Lake of Ontario, where she would enjoy the satisfaction of living under the English Government, which by her account, has offered her a grant of land.

NO. IV.

"At a Coach maker's in Canandaigua, I saw a Coach finishing for Jemima, the Universal Friend, as she calls herself; which one of her avant-couriers or followers-after, was waiting to transport to Crooked Lake, the seat of her abominations. On each side pannel was a star, and on the rear of the carriage a cross of six or eight inches, surmounted by a star, with the letters U. F. on each side of the cross. I saw this woman many years since; she was then young and handsome, she is neither now, She pretended and yet pretends, to be more than mortal. Jemima Wilkinson, she says, was dead and buried; and to her followers she whispers, that she arose from the dead, the Savior of the world! It was a doubtful point, some few months past, whether she would not be indicted for blasphemy; but the Grand Jury not having sufficient proof, dismissed the bill. Finding that she made few proselytes in the large cities, she retired into this part of the country, and with her own, and the funds of her followers, purchased of the state about 1800 acres of land, to which she gave the name of Jerusalem. She is ignorant, but artful; speaks sententiously, interlards her discourse, aptly and inaptly, with scripture, and is seen only at stated periods by the world, as she terms all but he followers.

"They tell a pleasant story of Jemima: A little girl, who had reported that one of her followers had come into the window in the night, was called to account by the saint, who told her that it was an *angel*, she had seen come in at the windiw; the child answered, that she believed it was an *angel*, but his coat had on it just such buttons as Mr. — wore.

"Her tribe amounts to about seventy old men, old women, and young children, and except she divides the property, the greatest share of which she has contrived to possess herself, will not increase."

NO. V.

"JEMIMA WILKINSON.

"This consummate and successful impostor, upon her visiting the city of Philadelphia, resided during her stay in that city, at the house of my father. The novelty of such a character attracted general notice. Our family became incommoded by the numerous visitors that were desirous of communicating with her on the important subject of religion. Her popularity as a preacheress, has never been surpassed. The Methodist Episcopal St. George's Church was by the trustees granted her, in which her oratory was displayed, to the wonder and astonishment of thousands who attended her ministrations. She was masculine by articulation and appearance. Her jet black hair, which she always kept moist, by frequent washing, which made it assume a glossy appearance, with black eyes and fair complexion, gave her an interesting appearance. She possesses a commanding and audible voice.

"Upon any occasion when she walked out, the crowd that attended her person became so great that it was inconvenient for her to be seen in public. After this discovery she would not be seen walking. When she paid a visit, or attended divine service, her followers had her conveyed in a carriage to her destined place. I remember perfectly well, that the street and pavements opposite my father's house, were without intermission crowded daily.

"Our next door neighbor, Mrs. S. W. became one of her proselytes, and when Jemima took her departure from our city, this infatuated lady forsook her husband and children, and accompanied her, with a number of others, to her new settlement. This lady did not continue a long time absent from her family, before she returned in disgust against this impostor. The report which circulated respecting the circumstance of this lady's re-appearance, was, as near as I can recollect, as follows :—

"When her and her followers were seated in the chapel, and after a long silence, Jemima arose from her seat, and with an audible voice proclaimed—"Sarah !--Sarah ! !—-Sarah ! ! !—-I have a message from God unto thee, this night thy soul will be required of thee." She then sat down. Mrs. W. has been heard to say, that such a terror seized on her mind, and the rest of the auditors, as tongue could not describe. This was on account of their having implicit faith in her as a prophetess. This happened in the winter, and a remarkable providence was manifested in the preservation of Mrs. W.'s life, The house in which they resided, being much crowded, Mrs. W. had for her bed companion, a white domestic, one of the sisterhood. When the appointed time arrived for the members of this devoted family to retire, which was 9 o'clock, Mrs. W. with a palpitating heart, went to her chamber, and occupied the front part of the bed. The girl, in consequence of having had a large washing on that day, did not retire that night, until near 12 o'clock. Mrs. W. could not close her eyes in sleep, and awaited the time of her expected dissolution with an awful suspense; but judge her surprise, when about ten o'clock, her room door opened. Hearing this, she concluded her bed fellow had finished her work, and was coming to take her rest, but to her astonishment, Jemima entered, dressed in white, with a veil over her head, holding a lighted candle in each hand, and passed close to her bed side, with a very slow pace, looked at Mrs. W., without uttering a word, after which she retired.

"Mrs. W.'s mind was racked with ten thousand contending fears, and she could not close her eyes. She continued in this state until the hour of 11 o'clock arrived. Jemima re-appeared, after the same manner as before represented, pursued the same course as before, and retired without uttering a word. Mrs. W. could not fathom her mysterious conduct. At the approach of midnight, her apprehensions became insupportable. It so happened, by the orders of an over ruling hand, that before the hour of 12 o'clock, the girl did retire, and in order to accommodate her, Mrs. W. removed to the back part of the bed, and the girl took her warm place; and on account of her being much fatigued, she soon fell asleep. About the dead hour of midnight, the door again opened. All was darkness; and Mrs. W. could not perceive the object that entered, but she heard it approaching towards the bed, on a sudden the girl began to struggle for existence. Mrs. W. not knowing the cause, gave the alarm, and a person fled with precipitation from the room. Mrs. W. interrogated the girl respecting the cause. Her answer was, that some person had her by the throat, and was trying to strangle her. Here was at once a development of the character of this fiend, this monster of depravity.

"From this circumstance it appears self-evident, that Jemima's first visits with the candles were to reconnoitre and ascertain the exact position of her intended victim; that her prediction should be verified; and by that means a confirmation of her possessing supernatural powers would be established in the minds of her credulous followers. But happily, her design was frustrated by Mrs. W. leaving her first position; and her murderous intention was defeated. Had Mrs. W. maintained the place she first occupied, her success would have been complete. On account of the fatigue of the girl, her sleep would have been so heavy, that she would be insensible to the struggles of Mrs. W. Consequently the morning light would have proclaimed to her devotees, her knowledge of future events, and of her having a direct communication with Almighty God. Such was the credulity of her followers, that they viewed her as a second Christ.

"After the public notoriety of the diabolical means she had resorted to for the further purpose of imposition, many anecdotes got in circulation respecting her, which became the topic of general conversation, and shall be the subject of another communication, as I conceive every particular that relates to this extraordinary and wonderful woman, must be interesting to the community."

"To cap the climax of desperation, this wanton of folly had information extensively circulated that she would, on a particular day, manifest her power and divinity, by walking on a certain river. Curiosity was upon tiptoe, to witness such a phenomenon in nature. It is to be presumed, that thousands from every quarter repaired to the appointed place.

"Jemima appeared, attended by the brothers and sisterhood of the fraternity, and commenced the exercises by addressing the multitude present, upon the important subject of faith, and endeavored by argumentation to persuade her hearers that if she did not perform her promise, it would be owing to their unbelief; and in order to exemplify and enforce conviction on their minds, she cited the case of Peter, and averred that he walked on the water, until he and his brethren's faith had departed from them; then Peter began to sink, and in his extremity 'Jesus stretched forth his hand, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt.'

"After the conclusion of this harangue, Jemima approached the margin of the river, and lo! as she trod the water, it would not obey the sovereign command, to uphold her unhallowed and ponderous weight! After this experiment, she indignantly retreated upon the multitude, and reproved them as the cause, and as a verification of her prediction, declared in the language of our Lord—'This is an evil generation; they seek a sign, and there shall be no sign given it, for as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall Jemima be to this generation. The Queen of the South shall rise up in judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold, a greater than Jonas is here.'

"How the disappointed expectants suffered her to retire from this scene of action, I did not learn.. Notwithstanding her repeated discomfitures, by endeavoring to perform an act calculated to convince the most credulous of her admirers of her Messiahship, still, like the staunch murderer, steady to her purpose, she was determined to made another effort of imposition. She and her immediate followers formed a conspiracy for deception, and pre-concerted a plan that promised success; for she had no doubt of the ultimatum, as the means to accomplish her project was within her own borders and under her control.

"This Anti-Christ and her apostles agreed to circulate a report, that one of Jemima's apostles was severely indisposed. After this, his death was announced; the day appointed for his funeral obsequies; and that Jemima, having lost her favorite and beloved apostle, would only suffer him to sleep four days in death, and after that raise him again. This account spread far distant, and the concourse which assembled to witness this solemn transaction was represented to be immense. Jemima and her family walked in procession to the grave. When they had arrived at the place of interment, Jemima commenced their ritual ceremonies, by a short introductory discourse upon death and the resurrection; and she assured them, as it was in the days of her prototype, so it had continued from generation to generation. Calumny and detraction put ocular demonstration and truth to defiance; and that a prophet was not without honor, save in his own country; and concluded by promising to perform such a miracle in the presence of her God and his people, as would convince them of her divine mission. She spoke largely of the affection she entertained towards the deceased; denominating him a beloved apostle, but assuring them that he should rise again from death, in their presence. After concluding her sermon, she recited by rote (she was considered a perfect scriptorian) from the 1st verse of the 11th chapter of St. John's Gospel, until she came to the 41st verse. Every spectator was big with expectation, to witness the issue, and Jemima no less sanguine as to the result, and the establishment of a belief that she was more than mortal.

"But unfortunately for this Jezebel, and artful woman, an officer happened to be present, witnessing this farce, and it appeared by his own declaration afterwards, that he was convinced from the whole tenor of the exhibition, an imposition was intended, and would be practised, unless a proposition was made, which, if acted upon, would effectually prevent the supposed dead man from rising. Accordingly this wight, having more courage and daring than any one present, just as Jemima had ended repeating the 40th verse, and was about offering up, with sacrilegious lips, the prayer that our blessed Lord offered previous to his commanding Lazarus to come forth, commanded her to stop until he had run his sword through the coffin; and after that he would guarantee her beloved apostle would never rise again. The man in the coffin, having heard the conversation and determination of the officer, forced off the cover of the coffin and walked out, to the no small terror of some, and the astonishment of all present!

"The chagrin of this undaunted champion of a diabolical system bears no parallel. Independent of that fatal development of her anti-christian spirit, her hardihood and effrontery upon this as well as all other occasions, has never been surpassed. How she escaped the vengeance of an indignant and insulted public, I cannot fathom: but the presumption must be, that her being a female, and viewed as a fanatic, was her passport to protection."

NO. VI.

"*The last Will and Testament of the person called the Universal Friend, of Jerusalem, in the county of Ontario, and State of New York—who in the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-six, was called Jemima Wilkinson, and ever since that time the Universal Friend, a new name which the mouth of the Lord hath named.*

"Considering the uncertainty of this mortal life, and being of sound mind and memory, blessed be the Lord of Sabaoth and Father of Mercies therefor—I do make and publish this my last Will and Testament—

"I. My Will is, that all my just debts be paid by by my Executors, hereafter named.

"II. I give, bequeath and devise unto Rachel Malin and Margaret Malin, now of said Jerusalem, all my earthly property, both real and personal: that is to say, all my land lying in said Jerusalem and in Benton, or elsewhere in the county of Ontario, together with all the buildings thereon, to them, the said Rachel and Margaret, and their heirs and assigns forever, to be equally and amicably shared between them the said Rachel and Margaret. And I do also give and bequeath to the said Rachel and Margaret Malin, all my wearing apparel, all my household furniture, and all my horses, cattle, sheep and swine, of every kind and description, and also all my carriages, wagons, and carts, of every kind, together with all my farming tools and utensils, and all my movable property, of every nature and description whatever.

"III. My Will is, that all the present members of my family, and each of them, be employed, if they please, and if employed, supported during natural life, by the said Rachel and Margaret, and when any of them become unable to help themselves, they are according to such inability, kindly to be taken care of by the said Rachel and Margaret. And my Will also is, that all poor persons belonging to the Society of Universal Friends, shall receive from the said Rachel and Margaret such assistance, comfort and support during natural life as they need—and in case any, either of my family, or elsewhere in the Society, shall turn away, such shall forfeit the provisions herein made for them.

"IV. I hereby ordain and appoint the above named Rachel Malin and Margaret Malin Executors of this my last Will and Testament—in witness whereof, I, the person once called Jemima Wilkinson, but in and ever since the year 1777, known as and called the Public Universal Friend, hereunto set my name and seal, the twenty-fifth day of the second month, in the year of the Lord eighteen hundred and eighteen.

THE PUBLIC UNIVERSAL FRIEND. [L.S.]

IN PRESENCE OF &C. &C.

"*Be it remembered*, That in order to remove all doubts of the due execution of the foregoing Will and Testament, being the person who before the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven was known and called by the name of Jemima Wilkinson, but since that time as the Universal Friend, do make, publish and declare the within instrument as my last Will and Testament—as witness my Hand and Seal, this seventeenth day of the seventh month, (July) in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighteen.

HER
JEMIMA-|-WILKINSON. [L.S.]
CROSS *or* MARK.
OR UNIVERSAL FRIEND."

WITNESSES, &C.

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